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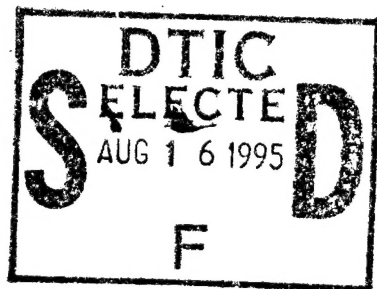# MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

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THESIS

GERMANY AS A NORMAL COUNTRY: NATIONAL IDENTITY AND NATIONAL SECURITY

by

Mary-Ann McGriff

March, 1995

Thesis Advisor: Donald Abenheim

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The reunification of Germany has raised renewed concerns regarding German national identity and national security. Germany has been a pivotal point for some of the most momentous historical events in Europe for over a century. The reunification of Germany in 1990 has once again created a large and powerful German nation at the center of the continent. Many of the initial reactions to reunification have reflected deep concern and skepticism regarding the power and role of a united Germany. Indications of extremist violence, xenophobia, and increased assertiveness in foreign affairs have fueled these concerns. Behind many of these fears is the belief that the German "national character" is unchanged and could reassert itself in renewed aggressive nationalistic policies.

This thesis examines the development of German national identity and the problems of national security since the beginning of the nineteenth century. The primary aspect of national identity examined is the way that Germany seeks security for itself. During the Cold War, the Federal Republic developed a national identity based on a liberal internationalism. Although reunification will undoubtedly cause some changes, it is unlikely that Germany will deviate from its commitment to democratic ideals and further European integration.

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GERMANY AS A NORMAL COUNTRY:
NATIONAL IDENTITY AND NATIONAL SECURITY

by

Mary-Ann McGriff
Lieutenant Commander, United States Navy
B.A., Hanover College, 1980

Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

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Author: _____
Mary-Ann McGriff

Approved by: _____
Donald Abenheim, Thesis Advisor

_____
Daniel Moran, Second Reader

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Thomas Bruneau, Chairman
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ABSTRACT

The reunification of Germany has raised renewed concerns regarding German national identity and national security. Germany has been a pivotal point for some of the most momentous historical events in Europe for over a century. The reunification of Germany in 1990 has once again created a large and powerful German nation at the center of the continent. Many of the initial reactions to reunification have reflected deep concern and skepticism regarding the power and role of a united Germany. Indications of extremist violence, xenophobia, and increased assertiveness in foreign affairs have fueled these concerns. Behind many of these fears is the belief that the German "national character" is unchanged and could reassert itself in renewed aggressive nationalistic policies.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The reunification of Germany has raised renewed concerns regarding German national identity and national security. Germany has been a pivotal point for some of the most momentous historical events in Europe for over a century. The reunification of Germany in 1990 has once again created a large and powerful German nation at the center of the continent. Many of the initial reactions to reunification have reflected deep concern and skepticism regarding the power and role of a united Germany. Indications of extremist violence, xenophobia, and increased assertiveness in foreign affairs have fueled these concerns. Behind many of these fears is the belief that the German "national character" is unchanged and could reassert itself in renewed aggressive nationalistic policies.

This thesis examines the development of German national identity and the problems of national security since the beginning of the nineteenth century. The primary aspect of national identity examined is the way that Germany seeks security for itself. The German state was created in 1871 largely in order to resolve their security dilemma of the early nineteenth century as they found themselves continually threatened from both the east and the west.

German identity therefore coalesced around anti-foreign sentiments and the belief that Germans must unite to create a bulwark against threats from all sides. Bismarck sought to avoid the problems of being encircled by enemies by engineering a network of alliances that would make an anti-German war unlikely. During the Wilhelmine Period these agreements were allowed to lapse and Germany found itself isolated and once again facing threats on two sides. After World War I, Germany's political and economic isolation imposed by the terms of the Versailles Treaty was a chief contributor to the collapse of the fledgling Weimar Republic and the creation of Hitler's Third Reich. During the Cold War, the Federal Republic integrated with the West and developed a national identity based on a liberal internationalism. Integration meant that German security was guaranteed by the Atlantic Alliance and that France and Germany became staunch allies, relieving a long-standing source of continental tension. Since reunification Germany is in the most favorable security situation in its history, surrounded entirely by acknowledged friends and democratic states. It is unlikely that Germany will deviate from its commitment to democratic ideals and further European integration. Germany now has the opportunity to be a "normal" country, in that it has the same choices and responsibilities of its peers in the international system.

I. INTRODUCTION

With the end of the Cold War and the reunification of Germany, a large and powerful German nation is once again at the center of Europe. This eventuality has raised renewed questions regarding German identity and national security policies for the future. Reunification has been met with widespread skepticism and apprehension that a reunited Germany could revert to aggressive nationalistic expansionist policies. What has been viewed as increased assertiveness in foreign affairs and incidents of extremist violence have fueled these concerns. These fears seem to be largely based on Germany's history and the belief that the German "national character" is unchanging and has been laying dormant during the years of division.

German national identity has been a subject of concern, speculation, and debate since the nineteenth century. Germany has been the pivotal point for some of the most momentous historical events in Europe for over a century. German unification in 1871 profoundly changed the balance of power in Europe and subsequently contributed to the two world wars in the twentieth century. During the Cold War divided Germany was the focal point and the potential battlefield in the bipolar struggle between east and west with the two halves of the divided nation developing

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distinct ideological identities. The western side developed an identity based on liberal-democratic ideals while the east had a socialist-communist regime imposed on them. Reunification in 1989 was not the coming together of homogeneous parts but the merging of these two very different cultures. It would be natural for the national identity that the Federal Republic developed after 1949 to change in some fashion after the reunification of 1990. Such changes have occurred after previous momentous events in German history that impacted the Germans' perceptions of themselves and their role in Europe and the world.

This thesis will examine how renewed questions of German national identity since 1989 affect German national security policy as Europe emerges from the Cold War. The main facet of national identity that will be examined will be the way that Germany seeks security for itself. Germany has pursued many options in its attempt to resolve its security dilemma, with varying results for Europe. Some foreign policies have sought solutions through engagement tactics such alliance systems, European entanglements, and collective security. At other times Germany has disengaged itself through protectionist measures, nativist policies, or through discussions of neutrality. Germany has also carried out policies that appeared to seek engagement such as

unilateral intervention or expansion, which in the end only
served to isolate Germany from its neighbors.

This study conducts a general examination of the
emergence and changes in German national identity and
security posture since the nineteenth century. By virtue of
Germany's position at the center of Europe, how Germany
views itself and its international role and conducts its
foreign policy has a great impact on the stability of the
continent. Germany, for the first time since 1914, has the
opportunity to act and be treated like a "normal" country.
What this means to the Germans will have far-reaching
security consequences for us as well as them. Undoubtedly
the future direction of reunited Germany will define the
course of Europe as it enters the twenty-first century.

A.   NATIONAL IDENTITY AND NATIONAL SECURITY

The French Revolution marked the beginning of a "new
politics" based on the concept of popular sovereignty that
swept through Europe during the eighteenth and nineteenth
centuries. War and revolution had disrupted not only the
ancien regime but the very order of society and the people
sought to recapture a sense of community and unity. The
"new politics" provided a means to organize the masses. A
national consciousness developed in many countries as their
populations began to develop identities associated with the

people instead of the ruling elites. Although mass movements were beginning to make an impact on elite decision making, the common people actually had little individual involvement in the politics of the day, which were still dominated by the ruling classes. Over the course of the following century, however, mass participation was able to crystallize public opinion and became a force to be recognized and reckoned with by the ruling elite.[1]

In the past two centuries nationalism has become an overriding force in the structure of international and domestic relations of states. The forces of nationalism have taken many forms, making it difficult to define precisely as a concept. Nationalism was initially conceived as a unifying force which could provide a sense of national pride and unity enabling the people to liberate themselves from oppression and discrimination. In time, however, nationalism also showed itself capable of becoming an aggressive, divisive, destructive force characterized by intolerance, racism, and violence. The manifestation of nationalism in a particular group of people depends on the

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[1] There are several excellent works that deal with the complex issue of nationalism in general and German nationalism in particular including Peter Alter, *Nationalism*, Edward Arnold, 1985; Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalism, Five Roads to Modernity*, Harvard University Press, 1992; Michael Hughes, *Nationalism and Society, Germany 1800-1945*, Edward Arnold, 1988; and George Mosse, *Nationalization of the Masses, Political Symbolism and Mass Movements in Germany from the Napoleonic Wars Through the Third Reich*, Cornell University Press, 1975.

factors that promote the realization of their national identity. Nationalism develops as a group of people become conscious of their uniqueness based on any number of common factors such as religion, language, race, or culture. Any combination of these factors and/or other features can be made to form a national identity that is distinct from other groups. The emphasis is on shared attitudes, common heritage, historical memories, and an sense of common objectives. The building of a national identity is a rather ambiguous process of education intended to integrate diverse people into a cohesive social group. But the means as well as the motives for the development of a national identity vary as widely as the characteristics that those identities depend on. The establishment of a common national identity can provide the people with a sense of belonging that transcends other bonds, which in turn becomes a rationale for unity in and of itself. However, in building a sense of national cohesion, energies are often directed outwards in the form of animosity and suspicion of those people who do not conform to the national norms.[2]

The development of national identity and nationalistic forces can occur either with or without the framework of an established state. The creation of a nation-state can be the result of a nationalistic movement but it is not a

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[2] Alter, *Nationalism*, pp. 2-9 and 21.

requirement of nationalism. However, if a national identity becomes focused on the creation of a nation-state or the protection of an existing state, nationalism can become a political force directed against a perceived enemy that is seen as a threat to the nation. These perceived threats or enemies can be internal or external, leading to either domestic or international tensions. Carried to extremes in order to achieve a measure of security, nationalistic xenophobia can become aggressively hostile or protectively isolationist. Either form can be disruptive and lead to open conflict in the form of revolution, civil war, or war against another state.

As populations began to gain a sense of national identity and pride, states gradually ceased to be thought of as solely the property of the monarch but as an instrument for the advancement of broader "public" interests. This fundamental change to the nature of the state also changed the nature of the wars that were fought in its defense. The French Revolution which was fought for the establishment of a new national identity in France also stimulated a wide range of national feelings through much of Europe which in turn set off a flurry of conflicts throughout Europe culminating in the Revolutions of 1848. Initially monarchs took up arms to defend the status quo and prevent the spread of liberal ideas. But they were unable to stem the tide of

national sentiment and the power that it gave to the masses. Peoples demands to be heard culminated in the revolutions of 1848 which effected nearly all of Europe. Eventually the monarchs were forced to come to terms with nationalism. When nations developed unique identities, the nature of the armies that fought the wars changed, as well as the support of the people for the armies and the wars. As Europe evolved from a collection of small dynastic territories considered the exclusive property of a single ruler into nations that are an embodiment of their whole population, war evolved from the means to resolve disputes to the total mobilization of the societies' resources in order to defend national pride and prestige.[3] War and other levels of conflict spurred by nationalism have been prevalent since the end of the 18th century and have largely been responsible for the changing map of Europe. This phenomena is most recently demonstrated in former Yugoslavia where nationalist tensions have once again changed the map of Europe and caused the shedding of much blood. Germany, obviously not the only country to engage in war-like nationalistic behavior, does however present an interesting case of a nation brought together and torn apart by nationalism. Germany's legacy of war since it became a

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[3] Howard, Michael, *War in European History*, Oxford University Press, 1976, Chapter 6.

nation-state makes it important to look at the effects of its continuing evolution since reunification.

B. THE EVOLUTION OF GERMAN NATIONAL IDENTITY

In order to examine fully the impact of the evolving German national identity, it is first necessary to conduct a general examination of the emergence and changes in German national identity. Only through a broad understanding of the development of German national identity is it possible to gain insight into the interrelation between national identity and national security.

Ideas of a comprehensive German national identity and a nation of Germans came late in comparison to other European nationalities. In the early nineteenth century, German cultural identity began to develop a political expression in the wake of the French Revolution, French hegemony over the continent, the Wars of Liberation. As a more cohesive identity and desire for unity grew, ideas of what constituted security also changed based on nationalistic ideas. German security interests would require the protection of a German state, rather than dependence on the Concert of Europe. German unity was ultimately achieved through war and ideas of what was required to protect the new German identity and security came to be viewed by the end of the nineteenth century as both aggressively

expansionist and protectionist, subsequently taking Europe through two devastating wars.

The changes in German identity following World War II reflected the devastation of the war years, the enforced division of the country, and the overriding political reality of the ensuing bipolar conflict of the Cold War. During the Cold War West Germany developed a national identity based on a deeply rooted sense of liberal internationalism especially in their security and foreign policies. But German action on both sides of the Iron Curtain was constrained by the knowledge that it was a divided nation and that an outbreak of Cold War tensions would turn Germany into a battlefield that would pit Germans against Germans. The Berlin Wall symbolized not only the division of Germany but the east-west confrontation that developed into the Cold War that dominated the political arena during the second half of the twentieth century. A divided Germany meant that German power was contained but it also divided the continent. However, in spite of the tensions and conflicts of the Cold War, the international political system revolved around the inherent stability of bipolar competition.

C. THE IMPACT OF REUINFICATION

The breaching of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the subsequent reunification of Germany has heralded the end of the Cold War and a new era for a united Germany as well as its European and Atlantic neighbors. The euphoria of 1989 however has now given way to uncertainty regarding the future. Perhaps the most momentous and disquieting consequences of the end of the Cold War are the changes affecting Germany. Reunification has fundamentally changed the image of Germany as a defeated and divided nation. While previous expansion of German borders have been conducted in a deliberate and aggressive manner, this most recent territorial expansion was as unexpected for most Germans as it was for the rest of the world. Not surprisingly, Germany's sudden reunification caught its neighbors off guard and has caused them to reassess the German Question. However, the reunification of Germany after nearly fifty years of existence as a divided nation was achieved peacefully with full knowledge and participation of its neighbors and partners. Yet the implications of this momentous event will have far reaching effects on German identity and security as well as that of Europe. There are elements of both change as well as continuity in the German national identity from its earliest

conception to the present. Understanding these factors can lead to a clearer view of the future in Europe.

The security situation in Europe has radically altered with the end of the Cold War and an enlarged Germany further exacerbates the adjustments that must be made in defining a new world order. Many of the initial reactions to German reunification reflected deep concern and skepticism regarding the power and role of a united Germany and in some cases blatant fears of a Fourth Reich. For the first time in nearly 50 years Germany once again has complete sovereignty and the opportunity to act more independently. Because of its size, economic power, and the geopolitical reality of being in the center of Europe, the extent to which Germany takes advantage of or exploits these new opportunities will have far reaching security implications. This is particularly important for the United States since constructive engagement on the part of the Germans depends fundamentally on similar American engagement.

The seemingly recent manifestation of German independence has been slowly emerging since West German rearmament and admission to NATO. This thesis will historically analyze German attitudes and trends in elite and popular opinion regarding their role in international security. Since reunification, the principal event to be considered will be the recent debates and reinterpretation

of the Basic Law regarding the out-of-area issue. The question of whether the German military will be permitted to participate in military missions other than national defense reflects the hopes and the fears of evolving German national identity.

D.   FEATURES OF THE GERMAN "NATIONAL CHARACTER"

Many of the current skeptics of German power seem to believe that the leading German role in the two world wars was a result of the special nature of the German people that will once again manifest itself now that the nation has been reunified. The national character of the Germans has been a subject of much speculation and debate. Throughout the centuries the Germans have seemingly assumed several distinct personalities, fostering persistent myths about their character. It was Luigi Barzini, a distinguished European journalist, that described the Germany as a "trompe l'oeil Protean country," comparing the German character to Proteus, the old man of the sea, who could change his identity at will to meet the situation at hand. Barzini noted that German history, from one chapter to the next, seems to describe entirely different countries. Not only do the borders, the name of the country, and the ideology differ but the very character of the people seems to

change.[4] The various myths regarding German national identity have been perpetuated by the Germans themselves who seem to carry each manifestation of their character to extremes.

The most persistent myths of German character revolve around the idea of the Germans as a militaristic and authoritarian people. This stems partly from their Prussian heritage and partly from their acknowledged role in the two world wars this century. These characteristics however cannot be applied to the Germans, on either side of the Iron Curtain, for the past five decades, although there are those who fear that these very traits will resurface now that the nation has reunited.

Aside from its warriors and dictators, there has been another traditional, older, view of the Germans as thinkers and philosophers. The apparent dichotomy between these two views of the German character has resulted in various analyses of the enduring features of the German national traits. There have been numerous studies undertaken to define the German character such as those by Willy Helpach, S.M. Lipset, and Max Weber. While these studies do not agree at every point some generalizations can be made. The German work ethic is ascribed by Weber to the influence of Calvinist Protestantism that has persisted in spite of large

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[4] Barzini, Luigi, *The Europeans*, Penguin Books, 1983, pp. 69-70.

Catholic and Lutheran segments of the population.[5]
Systematization is the tendency toward rationality and the
relationship between ideas and actions leading to such
traits as thoroughness and efficiency. There is also a
tendency to prefer supra-individual goals, reflected in a
idealistic commitment to society as a whole. The rules
following from these supra-individual goals are thought to
apply to everyone to avoid conflict in society. This "love
of order" leads them to seek authoritative solutions.
Another German trait is their sharp distinction between
their private and public virtues.[6] While these
characteristics can certainly lead to a militaristic or
authoritarian actions there is nothing inherent in these
traits that suggest that those are the only possible
outcomes. In fact we have seen these same traits applied by
the West Germans in the postwar years toward their economy,
democracy, and integration.

E. LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE

Barring a major, and at this time unforeseen, crisis in
Europe, united Germany is unlikely to deviate from its

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[5] Hellpach referred to this characteristic as the "urge to work," in
Der deutsch Charakter, Athanaeum, 1954.

[6] For a more complete discussion of these studies done on German
characteristics, see Dean Peabody's *National Characteristics*, Cambridge
University Press, 1985, Chapter 8, "The Germans."

commitment to the promotion of European unity and long-term peace. This is not to say that reunification will not result in further evolution of the German national identity. There is ample evidence that some important changes are occurring. Although indications of extreme nationalistic ideas, xenophobia, and protectionism have prompted widespread concern, there is even more evidence to show that the German political elite and the people themselves advocate a stronger international community in which Germany takes a more active and productive role.

If Germany is to successfully establish itself as leader in the post Cold War world without arousing alarm in its neighbors, it must come to terms with its power, geographic position, and its past. Trepidation regarding Germany's future role is not limited to its neighbors. Germans themselves are anxious regarding the seeming rise in neo-Nazi activities, the move of the capital from Bonn to Berlin, and most recently the reinterpretation of the German constitution that allows German troops to fight in foreign lands. It would seem that the old myths of a too powerful nationalistic and militaristic Germany are still close to the surface. What image will reunited Germany develop in the next century? As a new world order takes shape in the transition from the Cold War, the role of Germany will be critical. It is necessary to confront the apprehension

regarding German power by looking at how perceptions of the German character developed and changed and how they have been tempered by the lessons of the Cold War and combined with new realities in order to try to understand what the newly emerging German power will mean to Europe and the world.

II.   GERMANY AS A NATION-STATE IN THE EUROPEAN SYSTEM: THE IMPACT OF UNITY UNTIL 1945

The process of the development of a German national identity and the subsequent creation of a unified German state in the nineteenth century had a profound effect on the way Germans perceived themselves and their security situation. The creation of a large and powerful state where there had once been numerous small and relatively weak states also fundamentally changed the balance of power in Europe and was viewed as a potential threat by most of the established states. The skeptics of reunited German power look back to the years before World War II as one continuous policy of German striving for European hegemony. Those years, however, actually consisted of four different political periods with their own goals and objectives for German foreign policy. But to understand those periods, it is first necessary to take a brief look at the circumstances surrounding the birth of the German state.

A.   THE DEVELOPMENT OF GERMAN NATIONAL IDENTITY AND A UNIFIED GERMAN STATE

Germany did not become a unified modern nation-state until 1871. This development contrasts with France and England which were more or less established by the end of

the fifteenth century.[7] The German state was not formed until over a century after the American colonists had created the United States.

The idea of a German Reich as a successor to the Holy Roman Empire had been around for centuries. The first German Reich was the medieval Holy Roman Empire, a profusion of diverse independent lands loosely connected to the authority of a central, usually German, emperor.[8] The Peace of Westphalia, which brought the Thirty Years War to an end in 1648, formalized the historical fragmentation of German lands by recognizing over 300 sovereign German states. The first serious attempt to alter this state of affairs did not occur until the nineteenth century when Napoleon consolidated these German lands into fewer than 50 states. The Congress of Vienna in 1815 then created the Germanic Confederation of 38 autonomous states.[9]

The fragmentation and lack of central authority in Germany partially explains why a cohesive German national identity and liberal-democratic ideas developed so late there. The crisis of the nobility and ruling elites which had led to the development of national identity and

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[7] Craig, *The Germans*, p. 15.

[8] Ibid, p. 17.

[9] Craig, *Europe Since 1815*, p. 40.

revolution in England, France, and Russia did not occur in the German states. The German nobility remained largely satisfied with the status quo because their society was more strictly defined, their social privileges remained intact, and they retained a measure of self government. In Prussia, one of the larger German states from 1700 on, absolutism grew strong and essentially unopposed by the nobility, in return for having their rights in regards to the peasants firmly enforced.[10]

German nationalism first arose mainly among middle-class professionals and intellectuals in the late eighteenth. These educated commoners thought of themselves as a natural elite, but were denied commensurate social status because of the rigidity of Germany's quasi-feudal social structure. The ideas of nationalism ignited by the French Revolution appeared to them as a means of instilling their position as valued members of a national collectivity. Even though they were a small and relatively powerless group, they had far-reaching impact because of their influence in the press and the classrooms.[11]

The crises that spurred widespread German nationalism were the Wars of Liberation from Napoleonic domination in

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[10] Alter, *Nationalism*, pp. 55-58.

[11] Greenfeld, *Nationalism, Five Roads to Modernity*, Chapter 4, "The Final Solution of Infinite Longing: Germany."

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1812.[12] These conflicts not only provided a fresh impetus

for German nationalism but the first occasion when German

nationality formed expression in military action. Many

others would follow on in the next century and a half.[13]

During the decade of peace that followed the defeat of

Napoleon, further means of expressing their nascent German

national cohesiveness were a matter of intense and bitter

debate. One view was that a strong centralized State was

necessary to protect the Germans from the French.[14] More

widespread were a variety of less statist alternatives

generally associated with liberalism, at this time a loose

association of beliefs rather than a political movement.

Liberalism of this sort was particularly common among

members of the middle and upper classes who differed widely

in their backgrounds, status, and interests. Liberalism

accordingly stood for a complex of diverse, often very

generalized opinions and attitudes including a wish for

national unity, the replacement of bureaucratic absolutism

by political systems that allowed wider participation in

public affairs, the abolition of traditional institutions

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[12] Craig, *The Germans*, p. 32.

[13] Greenfeld, *Nationalism, Five Roads to Modernity*, p. 360. Liah
Greenfeld has argued that it was owing to the Wars of Liberation that
German nationalism became the most "activist, violent, and xenophobic
species of the phenomena." She does not however acknowledge that German
actions were in defense of the 'activist, violent, and xenophobic' wars
of nationalistic domination launched by the French.

[14] Craig, *The Germans*, p. 32.

that inhibited a free social and economic life, the lifting of press censorship, the partial or total separation of church and state, an independent judiciary, and improvements in public education.[15] The liberal program of nineteenth century Germans sought a constitutional government which would distribute rights and responsibilities to a wider range of educated and self-reliant citizens.[16] For most German intellectuals the goal of national unity and the ideas of liberalism were inseparable. The German liberals were unable to coalesce as a cohesive political movement and therefore mobilize wide public support. Eventually they were forced to abandon many of their ideals for reform in order to achieve national unity.[17]

It was Prussia, under the able leadership of Otto von Bismarck, that finally achieved German unity and coopting German liberalism. Until the 1860s, Prussia was an unlikely candidate for this role. Prussia was among the most conservative states in Europe and made no pretensions of conducting an independent foreign policy, preferring to defer primarily to Austria, but also to Russia whenever

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[15] Paret, Peter, *Art as History, Episodes in the Culture and Politics of Nineteenth-Century Germany*, **publisher and date**, p. 14.

[16] Craig, *The Germans*, p. 32.

[17] Paret, *Art as History, Episodes in the Culture and Politics of Nineteenth-Century Germany,* p. 152.

possible.[18] Austria was the unquestionably preeminent state in Germany. But Austria, facing conflicts within its empire, sought to prevent revolution and actively opposed liberal ideals and German unity. Although Prussia had nominally become a constitutional state in the aftermath of the revolutions of 1848, it maintained its autocratic character and began to take advantage of Austria's internal preoccupation in order to consolidate its own power.[19] This, in the end, was a military problem to which the Prussian army provided the ultimate solution.

Bismarck made German unity a reality through military and diplomatic means. He believed that it was Prussia's destiny to take the lead in German affairs even if it meant going against Austria. The opening salvo in the Prussian push toward German unification was the brief war waged by Denmark against Prussia and Austria over the provinces of Schleswig and Holstein. This conflict, fought for putatively "national" objectives helped lessen liberal opposition to military reform by enflaming patriotic pride. Although Prussia and Austria had been allies during the Danish war, disagreements arose regarding the final disposition of Schleswig and Holstein. These disagreements led to war between Prussian and Austria in 1866, culminating

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[18] Craig, *Europe Since 1815*, p. 147-148.

[19] Hughes, *Nationalism and Society, Germany 1800-1945*, pp. 102-104.

in the decisive defeat of Austria at Königgrätz in 1866. The Prussian victory not only excluded Austria from future German affairs but also resulted in the organization of a new confederation of 22 northern German states under Prussian leadership.[20]

Further German unity was opposed both by the French and a majority of the governments of the southern German states although many of the people still hoped for unity. However, when France declared war on Prussia in 1870, the southern states mobilized on the side of Prussia. The combined German armies not only outnumbered the French but were superior in organization and logistics. The French were quickly defeated. In the wake of this overwhelming German military victory Bismarck concluded his diplomatic victory by achieving German unity by establishing a new German empire under the King of Prussia.[21]

B.   THE FIRST TWENTY YEARS: BISMARCK'S SYSTEM OF STATES

The Franco-Prussian War completed the process of German unification. It also reorganized the European states system in ways that would place substantial burdens on the new

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[20] Reinhardt, Kurt, *Germany, 2000 Years*, The Bruce Publishing Company, 1950, pp. 537-542.

[21] Craig, *Europe Since 1815*, pp. 149-171.

German state. The Treaty of Frankfurt of May 1871 concluded
the peace between France and Germany but with harsh terms of
reparation and the loss of the territories of Alsace and
Lorraine that would preclude any lasting reconciliation
between the two states.[22] To some extent Bismarck had
anticipated the destabilizing effect of a large Germany. He
understood that German security was a fragile entity and
that the existence of a united Germany would be perceived as
a threat to the security of its European neighbors. To help
stabilize Europe and allow the fledgling German state time
to consolidate, Bismarck engineered a complex network of
alliances that made war in Europe unlikely.

The forces that drove the great powers of Europe in the
late nineteenth century had become increasingly complex.
Although Germany was a new entity, its location, size,
economic potential, and military might immediately made it a
continental power with significant influence. Imperialism
was a prime determining factor in foreign policy. France
and England focused their attention on the acquisition and
maintenance of their overseas colonies. Germany, Russia,
and Austria-Hungary, as continental imperialists, all vied
for influence in the same narrow geography of Central
Europe. Tensions were inevitable as territories were
liberated by the crumbling Ottoman Empire. Although the

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[22] Ibid, p. 171.

Congress of Berlin in 1878 attempted to settle territorial
questions in the Balkans and Africa, the final agreement was
not truly acceptable to any of the participants.[23] The tug
of war for advantage over rivals and even allies encouraged
revanchist attempts to regain lost territories.

Economic considerations became more important as money,
international finance, and trade became political weapons.[24]
Free trade suffered as countries became more protectionist,
prompting tariff wars and aggressive economic policies.[25]
German unification was followed by the Great Depression of
1873 to 1896. Germany's successes in industry and
manufacturing had created a great faith in German economic
abilities and liberal ideals. But once the depression was
underway, this confidence eroded and disillusionment set in
against individualism and materialism, basic concepts of
liberalism. Agriculture was also affected, as cheap imports
threatened land owners who pressured the government to take
protectionist measures. Disillusionment and political
instability resulted in the eclipse of the very German

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[23] Kennan, George F., *The Decline of Bismarck's European Order,
Franco-Russian Relations, 1875-1890*, Princeton University Press, 1979,
p. 37.

[24] Ibid, p. 223-228.

[25] Laqueur, Walter, *Russia and Germany, A Century of Conflict*,
Transaction Publishers, 1990, pp. 55-56.

liberalism that had contributed so much to the creation of the German state.[26]

Germany was acutely aware of its status as a relative newcomer and also as the central, "balancing" power of the system. Austria-Hungary was a troubled empire, preoccupied with preventing the effects of the crumbling Ottoman Empire from spreading to its empire. Russia was loathe to acknowledge anything but complete victory in negotiations and considered any concession a loss of prestige. France deeply felt the humiliation of their defeat in the Franco-Prussian war and was determined to take revenge on united Germany.[27] England was fully absorbed by its own vast colonial empire, but kept a watchful eye on the machinations of the continental powers.

As national identities had coalesced across Europe, nationalism began to develop as a powerful force in international relations, which was now increasingly subject to the vagaries of public opinion. Ideas of national identity also acquired more militant and anti-foreign overtones. The French focused their attention primarily against the Germans due to their lost pride and territories and their fear of the German military might. Pan-Germanism

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[26] Hughes, *Nationalism and Society, Germany 1800-1945*, pp. 131-132.

[27] Kennan, George F., *The Decline of Bismarck's European Order, Franco-Russian Relations, 1875-1890*, Princeton University Press, 1979, pp. 7 and 33-37.

and pan-Slavism became mass movements, and their ideologies found greater institutional expression. Not only were a broader range of people being included in politics, but many of the elite began to be influence by the nationalist fervor. Governments did little to stem the nationalist tide, partly because they did not recognize its power, but also because the strong anti-foreign rhetoric served to deflect attention from their own failures. Even so, nationalism was a shifting force and created internal problems as well as distorting external relations, notably within the multicultural empires of Russia and Austria-Hungary.[28]

The tensions between the powers constantly threatened to erupt into war. There were numerous proxy wars and limited conflicts outside Europe in the first two decades of the Second German Empire. Each nation was protective of its own interests while seeking to contain and isolate its rivals. Yet continental Europe, despite the tension and divisive tendencies managed to enjoy a period of relative peace, progress, and prosperity.[29]

This peaceful state was due to a great extent to the system of states engineered by Bismarck, whose fundamental

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[28] Ibid, pp. 38 and 417-421.

[29] Bond, Brian, *War and Society in Europe, 1870-1970*, Oxford University Press, 1986, p. 40.

principle was to ensure that Germany was allied to at least
two of the five major powers. As early as 1873 Germany,
Austria-Hungary, and Russia had established the Three
Emperor's League, which called for mutual consultation on
important international issues but did not provide any
guarantees of security. With the conclusion of the Dual
Alliance in 1879, Germany's first and staunchest ally became
Austria-Hungary. This treaty provided mutual security and
furthermore encouraged the Russians to strengthen their ties
with Germany. The Three Emperor's League was thereupon
renewed and strengthened in 1881. While it did not
guarantee security it provided for neutrality in the event
of war with a fourth power. In 1882 Germany, Austria, and
Italy entered into the Triple Alliance.[30]

The aggregate effect of these agreements was to isolate
France, thus providing the essential security that Germany
sought.[31] England too was considered a desirable ally for
Germany, but the English did not respond to German
overtures, preferring to focus on their colonial empire.
Relations between Austria and Russia were increasingly
strained and undermined efforts to build a solid alliance.
Moreover since many provisions of the treaties were done

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[30] Reinhardt, *Germany, 2000 Years*, pp. 607-609.

[31] Craig, *Europe Since 1815*, pp. 187-188.

secretly there was a large measure of distrust and suspicion on all sides.

As tensions between the European powers continued to mount, it became increasingly difficult for Bismarck to maintain an advantageous alliance system. The possibility of preventive war was debated within the government. As early as 1875, when army chief of staff Helmuth von Moltke advocated war with France, a move that, at the time, would have enjoyed some public support.[32] A more fatalistic view of Europe's future began to emerge in which war with Russia was considered an inevitable, and even desirable, means of resolving deepening pan-German and pan-Slav hostilities. Bismarck was able to prevent these attitudes from becoming reality. To him, war was a statesman's ultimate weapon, not to be taken lightly.[33] He did not believe a war with Russia could result in gains that would exceed German losses. Those who argued for a preemptive war did not understand that war in the industrialized age had become a senseless, self-destructive undertaking, no longer suitable as a political weapon. The romantic ideas of war as a test of manhood, courage, and patriotism had not yet been tested by

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[32] Ibid, p. 184.

[33] Hillgruber, Andreas, *Germany and the Two World Wars*, Harvard University Press, 1981. pp. 3-6.

the new forms of butchery that modern technology had devised for the battlefield.[34]

Bismarck's system of alliances was doomed to fail as a new generation of monarchs came to power, first in Russia them in Germany. Tsar Alexander III became the new Russian ruler in 1881. Although he was very conservative, he was sympathetic to the pan-Slav movement and more interested in the Balkans. He was suspicious of the Austro-Hungarians and tended to be anti-German.[35] But it was Kaiser Wilhelm II, who took the German throne in 1888, who allowed the fragile system of alliances to lapse completely by forcing Bismarck's retirement in 1890.

C. THE WILHELMINE PERIOD

The transition from Bismarck's system to that of Wilhelm is commonly dated from Germany's failure to renew the so-called "Reinsurance Treaty," a secret agreement between Russia and Germany originally concluded in 1887, to last initially for five years. This treaty had been Bismarck's final attempt to keep Russia away from France, while maintaining a semblance of harmony between Russia and Austria-Hungary in the east. The decision to allow it to

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[34] Kennan, *The Decline of Bismarck's European Order, Franco-Russian Relations, 1875-1890,* pp. 365 and 423-424.

[35] Ibid, pp. 61-63.

lapse signaled the arrival of a new, more assertive and "national" approach to foreign affairs in Berlin. Wilhelm had especially disliked Bismarck's even-handed policy toward Russia, and wished to move closer to Austria instead. The results quickly became evident in the Franco-Russian Treaty of 1894, after which Germany had little alternative but to stick by its Austrian partner and its even weaker and much less reliable ally, Italy.[36]

That this was a position tantamount to isolation is evident in retrospect. But its effects were not immediately recognized at the time. After having become accustomed to German success for such a long period of time, natural pride had turned somewhat arrogant and Bismarck's successors felt that his painstaking measures to maintain that success were no longer needed.[37] There were indeed ample reasons for German pride and confidence in its powers. In the two decades before World War I, Germany enjoyed considerable economic, scientific, and intellectual growth[38] along with its continued military prowess.

The style most often attributed to the Wilhelmine period is one of "garish display and vulgar ostentation."[39]

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[36] Hillgruber, *Germany and the Two World Wars*, p. 3.

[37] Craig, *From Bismarck to Adenauer: Aspects of German Statecraft*, The John Hopkins Press, 1958, p. xv.

[38] Craig, *Europe Since 1815*, p. 257.

This extended to Germany's dealings in foreign affairs. The Kaiser not only abandoned Bismarck's system of alliances but changed the focus of German foreign policy to the attainment of world power rather than the maintenance of a continental balance favorable to Germany.[40] This desire for world power manifested itself through military growth and the attainment of an overseas empire.[41] Germany looked to England to fill the gap created by its loss of the Russian connection, and in the 1890s there had been a real possibility for an Anglo-German entente. However, the British were alienated by Germany's naval build up and aggressive activities in colonial affairs. By 1907, Britain had moved firmly into the Franco-Russian camp.[42]

In the end it is Germany's indispensable link to Austria that created the conditions that finally allowed a Balkan crisis to produce a world war. The crisis of 1914 was allowed to develop in hopes of enhancing Austria-Hungary's status as a Great Power, based on a regional victory in the Balkans. Although Germany was in no position to conduct an all-out war, it depended on the other powers

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[39] Ibid, p. 258.

[40] Hillgruber, *Germany and the Two World Wars*, p. 1.

[41] Craig, *Europe Since 1815*, p. 258.

[42] Hillgruber, *Germany and the Two World Wars*, p. 9. Gordon Craig also notes the effect of the realignment of European powers in *From Bismarck to Adenauer: Aspects of German Statecraft*, he quotes Maximillian Harden in 1906 as saying that "When Bismarck departed, France was isolated; when Holstein went, Germany was."

also being adverse to a general war and restraining
Russia.[43] But once the hostilities had begun Germany found
it was unable to contain the crisis because of the rigidity
of German war plans[44] and because its Austro-Hungarian ally
could not be induced to break off its attack on Serbia. The
decision for war could not be understood from an economic
standpoint since the unavoidable losses would exceed any
expected gains. The resolve for war came about as the
result of Germany's concern, shared by the other powers,
with prestige, political imperialistic objectives in the
Balkans, the inability to back away from the conflict, and
nationalistic rivalries.[45]

Once the war was underway, it became apparent that
implementation of the Schlieffen Plan had failed to bring
war to a swift conclusion.[46] There were two views on the
goals of the war in Germany. The chancellor, Theobald von

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[43] Hillgruber, *Germany and the Two World Wars*, pp. 30-31.

[44] Germany had recognized the very real possibility of a two front
war but had long considered the greater threat to be from the French in
the west. Count Alfred von Schlieffen, chief of the German general
staff, developed a war plan that called for the swift defeat of France
(within six weeks) in order to be prepared to face the potentially
greater onslaught from the east. This plan required a German sweep
through neutral Belgium in order to reach France, a move that was sure
to bring Britain into the war. The rigidity of the plan was the lack of
any contingency planning in the event of a smaller scale war, a threat
from a different direction, or that war in the west lasted more than six
weeks. The Schlieffen Plan committed Germany to a single course of
action. Brian Bond, Gordon Craig, and Andreas Hillgruber all discuss
the deficiencies of Germany's war plans prior to World War II.

[45] Hillgruber, Germany and the Two World Wars, pp. 36-39.

[46] Craig, *Europe Since 1815*, p. 334.

Bethmann-Holweg, believed that if Germany could successfully defend itself against the Triple Entente then it would have demonstrated its great power status. Opposing this status quo objective was General Erich von Ludendorff who felt that Germany's future depended not only on winning the war but by greatly expanding German territory and power. Ludendorff's views received stronger support by public opinion and particularly coincided with the goals of the Pan-German League which sought to push Russia back to the borders of Peter the Great and build a great German empire at the expense of the Slavs. Their idea was to control and economically exploit central Europe and reduce Russia to a state of German dependency.[47]

All countries had entered the war with the belief that the war was justified by liberal ideals. Even in Germany and Austria there was a liberal element to their goals since they believed they were preventing further Russian expansion.[48] But as the war proceeded all the countries suffered a decline of liberal attitudes and increased political centralization.[49]

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[47] Hillgruber, *Germany and the Two World Wars*, pp. 42-45.

[48] Howard, Michael, *War and the Liberal Conscience*, Rutgers University Press, 1978, p. 73.

[49] Craig, *Europe Since 1815*, pp. 342 and 348.

After the Russian revolution in 1917, Russia sued for a separate peace with Germany and it seemed as if the Germans had succeeded in their efforts to make the Russians subservient.[50] The seemingly sudden collapse of the German government and surrender to the allies came as a shock to the majority of the German population.[51] Instead of defeating the German nationalist forces, the ending of the war and the peace that followed encouraged a more virulent form of nationalism to flourish. Although democracy was imposed on Germany and the League of Nations was established to resolve disputes between all nations through arbitration and sanctions, the allied victory would prove to be a fleeting and incomplete liberal success.

D.   THE WEIMAR REPUBLIC: THE FAILURE OF DEMOCRACY

In the chaos that followed World War I, no clear system of states emerged that could maintain peace and govern the interaction of nations. The liberal ideas that had provided so much hope before the end of the war had not survived the peace negotiations. The ideal of self-determination succumbed to what appeared to be the old system of balance of power that redistributed territories of the vanquished to the victors with little consideration for self-

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[50] Hillgruber, *Germany and the Two World Wars*, p. 47.

[51] Craig, *Europe Since 1815*, p. 399.

determination or even civil liberties.[52] The conservative
dynasties of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Russia had fallen
and a new map of Europe was drawn up as territories were
redistributed and independence granted to many of the
disputed areas of central and eastern Europe.

The isolation of Weimar Germany was set in motion by
the peace settlement of the Treaty of Versailles. The
French especially took the opportunity to exact revenge for
their treatment at the hands of the Germans after the
Franco-Prussian War. Germany had not only claimed Alsace-
Lorraine and imposed heavy indemnities but had humiliated
the defeated French by proclaiming the Second German Reich
at the Hall of Mirrors in Versailles.[53] The peace
conference to end World War I was also held in Versailles
where the French demanded and received the rich German
Saarland as well as Alsace-Lorraine, substantial
reparations, and the humiliation of the Germans by forcing
them to accept complete war guilt and curtailed sovereignty.
The victors hoped to preserve peace by ensuring that Germany
was too weak to rise again.

The violence and destruction of World War I had shocked
Europe and most of the survivors wanted nothing more than

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[52] Howard, *War and the Liberal Conscience*, p. 83.

[53] Kennan, *The Decline of Bismarck's European Order, Franco-Russian Relations*, 1875-1890, p. 412.

peace to rebuild their lives. The old order was replaced with new, untried forms of government: communism in Russia and eastern Europe, and democracy in Germany. Governments focused on domestic issues and rebuilding political and economic institutions. Liberal thinkers hoped that the establishment of the League of Nations would create a new world order based on collective security and general disarmament.[54] But, the 1920s and 1930s would be years of continuous crises that tested and eventually defeated hopes for a new era of peace.

Although all the European governments were shaken to some degree by the political and economic upheaval following World War I, for Germany it would mean the failure of the short-lived democratic experiment. The German republic had been declared on November 9, 1918 as a result of worker revolution and the abdication of the Kaiser. The change was widely welcomed by the German people who had become completely disillusioned by the rigid hierarchy of the monarchy that had produced such a disastrous war. But Germany faced continual challenges both in its foreign affairs and domestically that prevented democracy from firmly taking root. The new German constitution bore the seeds of its own destruction by attempting to implement the highest ideals of the democratic method. Although the

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[54] Howard, *War and the Liberal Conscience*, pp. 85-86.

proportional representation mandated by the constitution was the best way to represent all opinions, there was such a broad spectrum of opinions that it created a profusion of parties making a coalition government inevitable. The political environment was highly volatile and not conducive to the stabilization of the new government. To compound the problem of maintaining a stable government, the new constitution provided the President with extensive powers including the right to suspend the constitution in times of emergency.[55]

German statesman of the Weimar period were unequal to the task of building stability for Germany. Walter Rathenau and Gustav Steersmann both recognized the importance of accepting the burdens of the peace settlement and that the critical problems that Germany faced could best be resolved by engaging Germany in European affairs. They sought to build confidence in Germany's intentions in order to relieve the burden of the Versailles Treaty and regain political and economic freedom.[56] But politics of moderation and integration met with resistance in the German Republic. The harsh terms of the Treaty of Versailles and the crises they created gave rise to radical opposition ranging from ardent

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[55] Craig, *Europe Since 1815,* pp. 399-404.

[56] Craig, *From Bismarck to Adenauer; Aspects of German Statecraft,* Chapter 3, "Three Republican Statesmen: Rathenau, Stresemann, and Bruening."

communists on the left to supernationalist patriots on the right. Efforts by the government to meet the terms of the Treaty of Versailles were viewed as treasonous, particularly by right wing nationalist extremists, who persisted in believing that Germany's surrender had been a product of weak civilians rather than defeat of its armies.[57]

Economics of the interwar years took on an added importance throughout Europe because of the world financial crisis from 1929 into the 1930s. The economic integration that Europe had enjoyed before World War I was not re-established after the war. Governments turned inward as their populations grew more desperate. Because of their heavy war indemnities and the loss of the Saarland, Germany was especially hard-hit by economic difficulties.[58] After too brief a period of economic and intellectual growth during the late 1920s, the Depression was a strain on all democratic institutions. Germany, already politically unstable and with public opinion fractured succumbed to extremist pressures of the right.[59]

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[57] Craig, *Europe Since 1815*, pp. 402-404.

[58] Hillgruber, *Germany and the Two World Wars*, p. 62.

[59] Craig, *Europe Since 1815*, pp. 412-414.

E. THE NAZI ERA

Although the world economic crisis had facilitated Hitler's rapid rise to power, he was not essentially concerned with economic or domestic issues. He rejected economic ties that might result in political dependence, and focused on a more ambitious program for world dominance. The economic improvements he made were chiefly in the kinds of heavy industry necessary for war.[60] Hitler thus capitalized on Germany's isolation as well as flagging international support for the terms of the peace treaty. As Hitler became more aggressively revisionist, the western nations stood idly by since the harsh terms of the Versailles treaty made the German territorial claims seem somewhat justified loosely based upon self determination.[61] By a policy of appeasement the west sought to correct the wrongs of the treaty and integrate Germany in part, perhaps out of concern for the simultaneous threats by Russia and an increasingly assertive Japan.

The tension between capitalist nations and communist Russia shaped the European and global alignment of powers in the interwar years. With the restraining traditional

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[60] Hillgruber, *Germany and the Two World Wars*, p. 62; also Walter Laqueur, *Russian and Germany, A Century of Conflict*, pp. 306-307.

[61] Howard, *War and the Liberal Conscience*, pp. 104-105.

balance of power wiped away, the ideas of nationalism, communism, socialism, revanchism, expansionism, and racism emerged in new more virulent forms and found fertile grounds in the instability of the interwar years. As extremists found their voice and developed mass movements, the battle lines were drawn between communism and national socialism, Russia and Germany, Stalin and Hitler. As communism became established in Russia, the extreme right reacted to it by adopting equally revolutionary means -- mass movements, racism, and elimination of ones enemies -- to counter the threat. As the centrists quarreled and divided into factions, parties of the extremes took advantage of the confusion to gain power.

Hitler's National Socialist program was carefully engineered to gain public support and create a far-reaching mass movement.[62] He appealed to the popular ideas of the time by exploiting fears of the Slavs and communists and linking his national socialist party to the pan-German movement which already had a broad base of support in Germany. The pan-Germans anticipated many of the basic tenets of Nazism: racial superiority, mission to rule the world, contempt for law and international treaties, the belief of might over right, and a fear of being surrounded

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[62] Laqueur, *Russia and Germany, A Century of Conflict*, p. 304.

by enemies. The destruction of Russia and the Slavs was the cornerstone of Hitler's plan to build a pan-German empire.[63]

Fascism was everywhere a nationalist movement but Hitler's version incorporated a unique and deadly racism primarily aimed at the Jews, but also Slavs and any other "inferior" race. Jews were the scapegoats for all the ills of Europe; they were considered at once the agents of capitalism, socialism, liberalism, and communism; whatever was undermining the existing order.[64]

As diametrically opposed as communism and national socialism were on the political scale, their roots are remarkably similar and their politics became mirror images of one another. While their aims were very different, their methods were frequently similar and it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between the two. Both had emerged from the rubble of World War I and espoused totalitarianism as a necessity for growth and progress. Both used the power of propaganda to garner popular support. Although both communism and fascism were genuine mass movements, it was the leaders not the masses that shaped the policies and ultimately the outcomes.[65]

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[63] Hillgruber, *Germany and the Two World Wars*, p. 51; also Laqueur, *Russia and Germany, A Century of Conflict*, pp. 46-47.

[64] Laqueur, *Russia and Germany, A Century of Conflict*, p. 56.

[65] Ibid, p. 319.

Hitler had said that "Germany will be a world power, or there will be no Germany."[66] And indeed, he nearly destroyed Germany, and Europe too, in order to fulfill his promise.

World War II brought to an end 74 years of German unity. Hitler's legacy would taint that entire period and create a burden of history that has been slow to ease. Yet the first four decades were years of relative peace and prosperity for all of Europe, largely attributable to the policies of Bismarck who sought to mitigate the disruptive consequences that unifying Germany had caused. His system of alliances succeeded in tying Germany to other European powers. The divisive forces that destroyed his system after his forced retirement were not entirely of Germany's making. German foreign policies very much reflected those of the other European powers: colonial power, status and influence on the continent, protectionism, and of course nationalism. But Germany's central location made it both more vulnerable more threatening. By 1914, all of Europe was primed for war and the Balkan crises provided the spark. During the Weimar years after World War II, German efforts to once again establish firm ties with Europe were met with resistance from both their vengeful neighbors and own revisionist citizens. Germany had never been so vulnerable and alone.

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[66] Hillgruber, *Germany and the Two World Wars*, p. 48.

Its untenable security situation coupled with a weak democratic system contributed to the emergence of Hitler's extremist regime. Nevertheless, Germany was not alone in seeking extreme political solutions to the difficult interwar years, communism and fascism threatened the entire continent. In the end Germany was once again divided and provided a buffer zone in the center of Europe.

III. THE GERMANYS DURING THE COLD WAR

The ending of World War II created an entirely new situation in Europe. Germany was once again a fragmented nation but not one that resembled anything from the past. Its new borders had been arbitrarily drawn to facilitate the administration and reeducation of the Germans by the allies. The long-term political division of Germany had not been an intended consequence of the victors, but grew out of the tensions that developed between communist Soviet Union and the western democracies. The bipolar conflict that dominated the Cold War centered on divided Germany, symbolized after 1961 by the Berlin Wall. The geographic and ideological division of Europe created a new dimension of security problems and solutions. The clear-cut blocs that formed on either side of the Iron Curtain in no way resembled the shifting alliances of the past. The traditional German security dilemma was overtaken by the Cold War tensions that threatened to turn Germany into a battlefield with Germans on both sides of the confrontation. As the Cold War deepened both sides began to accept the status quo and ideas of the reunification of Germany faded. German security and identity were defined by the long-term division of the country and ideological battle between east and west.

A.   THE DIVISION OF GERMANY: ZONES OF OCCUPATION

The Alliance between the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union and the United States was held together by their common desire to defeat Hitler's Nazi Germany. Although their immediate goals coincided, there was little agreement on the disposition of Germany after the war. A series of conferences were held before the end of the war in order to reach some common understanding about the peace. The Teheran Conference at the end of 1943 was the first joint meeting between Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin. They agreed on the establishment of a new world organization to promote peaceful solutions to international problems.[67] Stalin advocated the division of Germany into several states as a means of preventing the resurgence of German nationalism, but no agreements were reached.[68] The London Protocol of September 1944 first suggested a proposition that the three powers to create zones of occupation within the German boundaries of 1937. The Yalta conference in February 1945 solidified the agreement on the occupation zones and the status of Berlin. However, the status of the German-Polish border was deferred because Russia was unwilling to

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[67] Craig, *Europe Since 1815*, p. 492.

[68] James, Harold, *A German Identity, 1770-1990*, Routledge, Chapman and Hall, Inc., 1989, p. 162.

surrender Polish territories it had gained.[69] Questions on
political, military and administrative issues remained
unresolved until the end of the war.

Under the relentless onslaught of the Allied Forces,
the Axis Powers faced defeat in the spring of 1945. The
final collapse came quickly. When he finally realized the
hopelessness of the situation, Hitler committed suicide in
his bunker in Berlin on April 30, 1945. Three days later
the Russians overran Berlin. The unconditional surrender of
Germany followed on May 7, 1945.[70]

Following World War II, Europe remained in a state of
chaos. The leaders were determined to avoid the errors of
the past that had led to two devastating wars within twenty-
five years. Unlike the ending of World War I, there was no
doubt in the minds of the German people that they were a
defeated nation. There was no general peace treaty to
conclude the war. Instead, arrangements were made by
piecemeal negotiations that gave a sense of impermanence to
the arrangements. Indeed, many of the arrangements were
intended to be temporary.[71] In June 1945, the Berlin
Declaration granted administrative authority to the three

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[69] Fritsch-Bournazel, Renata, *Confronting the German Question,
Germans on the East-West Divide*, Berg Publishers Limited, 1988, pp. 7-9.

[70] Craig, *Europe Since 1815*, p. 497.

[71] Ibid, p. 506.

powers plus France, with oversight by an allied central commission. The Potsdam Conference later that summer highlighted the growing conflicts between the western powers and the Soviet Union. The Russians insisted that Poland be granted lands as far west as the Oder-Neisse line which included a large portion of Prussia. An enclave surrounding Königsberg, the capital of East Prussia was ceded directly to the Soviet Union. Since Soviet troops occupied the entire eastern part of Germany and had borne the brunt of the ground war, the western allies felt compelled to accede to Russian pressures although a final determination was deferred indefinitely until a peace settlement was concluded. As devastating to Germany as the partition and loss of territory was the determination to relocate Germans from eastern Germany involving more than eleven million people with devastating social and economic consequences for Germany.[72]

The victors had intended for the partitioning of Germany to be a temporary measure only until the allies had demilitarized and reeducate the German people. Once they were rehabilitated, German sovereignty would be restored. But Soviet policies made cooperation between the zones problematic and seemed designed to prolong German hardship

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[72] Fritsch-Bournazel, *Confronting the German Question, Germans on the East-West Divide*, pp. 9-10.

and thereby promote communism.[73] The Russian zone of occupation became a dividing line between the Soviet Union and the western allies and disagreements regarding Germany's future deepened ideological differences and mistrust.

Cooperation between the Soviet Union and the western allies deteriorated over both political and economic issues. Local elections held in 1946 showed that the people in the Russian zone voted predominantly for socialist-communist parties while those in the western zones favored democratic parties. But it was disagreements regarding economic issues that ended any pretense of cooperation. Although Germany was supposed to be treated as a single economic unit, the Soviets continued to demand harsh reparations while the western allies tried to make Germany economically viable as soon as possible. In 1947 the British, French and American zones were combined into a single unit and Allied-Soviet cooperation degenerated into the Cold War.[74]

B.   TWO GERMAN STATES: THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF DIVISION

In 1949, the three western zones of occupation became the Federal Republic of Germany while the Soviets established the German Democratic Republic in their eastern

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[73] Craig, *Europe Since 1815*, p. 507.

[74] Bond, *War and Society in Europe*, pp. 203-204.

zone under communist control. The forces of nationalism
that had been so predominant after World War I became
crushed under the ideological confrontation of east and
west. Yet the decision to create separate German states was
not made lightly. German unity remained the ultimate
objective for the western allies and the Russians, as well
as the German people although for very different reasons.
The west viewed a united Germany as a bulwark against
further Soviet expansion while the Russians hoped to exploit
Germany economically and eventually assume political
control.[75] Germany was considered a valuable resource and
its strategic position made it impossible for either side to
allow the other to gain control or to permit Germany to find
its own way.[76]

The Germans hoped to retain some measure of their
identity. The devastation of the war and the reality of the
Nazi experience had shaken German confidence. It was not
allied efforts of "reeducation" that discredited forever the
Nazi ideology, but the Germans' own experiences of total
defeat and the chaos left in the wake of Hitler's
domination. When the western allies decided to fuse their
zones into a west German government in order to promote

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[75] Ibid; and also John Young, *Cold War Europe; 1945-1989: A Political History*, **Publisher**, 1991, p. 56.

[76] Young, *Cold War Europe; 1945-1989: A Political History,* p. 55.

further economic recovery, many Germans feared that this action would divide the nation as well as create a rift in the western zones if some Germans turned toward Soviet solutions for reunification. Therefore the western Germans were careful to create a government that would provide a provisional arrangement until the country was reunited. Instead of a constitution they drafted a Basic Law under liberal democratic principles. The drafters of the new document sought to correct some of the constitutional flaws that had facilitated the Weimar Republic's downfall. Much of the government's powers were decentralized to the Länder and the President's powers were curtailed. Their voting procedures were a mixture of proportional and direct representation in order to ensure a broad spectrum of the public would be heard in the government but at the same time discourage a proliferation of small extremist parties. A Constitutional Court was also established that had the power to determine the constitutionality of government actions and ban any political parties considered anti-democratic.[77]

Elections were held in August 1949. Konrad Adenauer of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) was named as the Chancellor. His long political career dated from 1906, although his experience had been principally limited to

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[77] Ibid, p. 54-58.

municipal administration, he had gained some national experience during the Weimar Republic. He had been dismissed from his post as Lord Mayor of Cologne by the Nazis in 1933. His experience and his talents gave him the qualities needed to lead West Germany to political and economic recovery.[78] Adenauer's Westpolitik espoused liberal-democratic ideals of full cooperation and integration with the west. He supported the development of multinational institutions that would firmly tie Germany to the other western nations. He hoped that German cooperation would build the confidence in German intentions in order to regain its sovereignty.[79]

Although Adenauer's policies were generally popular with the German public, his stance on relations with Russia and East Germany seemed to conflict with desires for speedy reunification. Ideology won out over nationalistic sentiments when Adenauer rejected Stalin's offer in 1952 of a unified but neutral Germany in favor of democracy and unity with the West. In reality, it was unclear whether Stalin's offer was genuine or primarily an effort to retard West Germany's military integration into NATO by exploiting the public's aversion to rearmament and desire for

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[78] Craig, *From Bismarck to Adenauer: Aspects of German Statecraft*, pp. 125-127.

[79] Craig, *Europe Since 1815*, p. 521.

reunification. Adenauer's refusal did not mean that German unification was unimportant to him but his focus was primarily on economic recovery, integration with the west, and anti-communism. He hoped to achieve national unity through a policy of strength by aligning with the west and particularly with the United States and its nuclear weapons, thinking the Soviet Union must relent in the face of a united front. Adenauer staunchly considered the Federal Republic the only legitimate German state and the December 31, 1937 borders as the frontiers of Germany as a whole. He not only denied recognition to East Germany as a state but refused to normalize relations with countries that did recognize the GDR.[80]

The loss of the eastern land meant that West Germany was in the most precarious security position since German unification in 1871. The new geography produced by Germany's division meant that the front line of the Cold War rivalry ran through German territories. West Germany was now a narrow country whose population was concentrated near its eastern border. This situation presented a security problem not only for the Germans but for all of Europe. Since Germany had been disarmed and had been forbidden to raise an army, the security of Germany rested with the occupying forces. And since Germany had twice led Europe to

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[80] Sodaro, Michael J., *Moscow, Germany, and the West From Khrushchev to Gorbachev*, Cornell University Press, 1990, p. 10.

war by attempting to resolve its security dilemma, it was imperative that German security be assured. The division of Germany added a potentially explosive revisionist dimension to post-war problems, reminiscent of those after the First World War.[81] German rearmament was a controversial issue, both at the international and the domestic levels. Germany's European neighbors were understandably hesitant to allow the resurrection of a German army. And a large portion of the German population felt that rearmament would be a mistake and wished to renounce arms forever. But deepening of the Cold War tensions and particularly the Korean War led the west to the realization that German rearmament would be crucial to the security of Europe.

In 1955, Germany began to rearmed as a full member of NATO and its sovereignty was restored. Ten years after the end of the war, occupation of West Germany was ended although the allies retained special emergency powers.[82] Germany also voluntarily placed some unique restrictions on their sovereignty by unilaterally forswearing the production of nuclear weapons and pledging to never use force to achieve unification.[83] Membership in NATO provided the

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[81] Joffe, Joseph, "German Defense Policy: Novel Solutions and Enduring Dilemmas," Chapter 3 of *The Internal Fabric of Western Security*, Gregory Flynn, ed., Allanheld, Osmun and Co., 1981, p. 65.

[82] Young, *Cold War Europe, 1945-1989: A Political History*, p. 63.

ideal solution to West Germany's security dilemma. It provided a formidable security guarantee and also restrained German military aggressiveness.[84] The new German army, the Bundeswehr, was completely recreated by a liberal-democratic state. The new force was one of "citizen in uniform" with a constitutionally narrow mission, under full control by civilian government.[85] Germany's militaristic tradition had been laid to rest. Although there was little in the way of a democratic tradition to build on in West Germany, its leaders actively sought to learn from lessons from the past, both its successes and failures. The political tradition of authoritarianism survived in a new form, now limited by the rule of law. The State, as in earlier times, was viewed by the Germans as a higher entity, but now it represented the common interests of the people rather than those of the political elite.[86]

Both East and West Germany struggled with problems of identity and legitimacy since neither state had sole claim to the German nation. East Germany may initially have had

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[83] Joffe, "German Defense Policy: Novel Solutions and Enduring Dilemmas," p. 67.

[84] Cowen, Regina, "West Germany," Chapter 5 of Defense Policy Making: A Comparative Analysis, G.M. Dillon, ed., Leicester University Press, 1988, p. 124.

[85] Joffe, "German Defense Policy: Novel Solutions and Enduring Dilemmas," p. 74.

[86] Lowenthal, Richard, "Why German Stability is So Insecure, *Encounter*," December 1978, pp. 34-35.

the greater claim to legitimacy since capitalism and democracy had led to Hitler and the communists had fought the Nazis. But any claim to legitimacy was lost as the East Germans voted with their feet and emigrated to the west in large numbers. In order to stem the flow of people, the GDR felt compelled to build the Berlin Wall in 1961, turning East Germany into a garrison state.[87] The most critical problem the GDR had was instilling an enduring sense of national identity in its own population.[88] The communist identity that the Soviets hoped to build was instilled more by the presence of the Red Army than by ideological convictions.[89] Public opinion played a large role in the GDR as the East German leaders contended with dissidents, peace activists, protesters, and citizens who had emotional ties to West Germany.[90] Along with emotional and historic ties to the west the GDR had economic ties necessary for its own recovery but these were balanced by political ties with the USSR. There was the constant fear that the Soviet Union would bargain away the GDR to the west in return for military or economic concessions. The East German state was

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[87] Sodaro, *Moscow, Germany, and the West From Khrushchev to Gorbachev*, pp. 10-11.

[88] Ibid, p. 264.

[89] Bond, *War in Society in Europe, 1870-1970*, p. 204.

[90] Sodaro, *Moscow, Germany, and the West From Khrushchev to Gorbachev*, p. 21.

dependent upon the continuation of the Cold War. The GDR
set out to become the model communist state and build an
economy that the Soviets would depend on, much as West
Germany strove to become a model democracy. But in dealing
with the west, the GDR's only effective tool was the control
over its fortified borders.[91] The GDR's obdurate policies
toward the west and assertiveness in Marxist doctrine
eventually came into conflict with Moscow.[92] The Soviet
Union had slowly come around to the idea that there must be
a dialogue between east and west even though the ideological
conflict between socialism and capitalism remained the axis
around which international political activity ultimately
revolved.[93]

Leaders in the west had come to the same realization.
During the first two decades of the Cold War West Germany
had adhered to its policy of Westpolitik and had become
fully integrated with the west but remained essentially
isolated from the east--particularly evident in the
political estrangement from East Germany. German foreign
policy was very much constrained by the bipolar
confrontation, the division of Germany, and the iron rule of
Konrad Adenauer. It wasn't until after Adenauer stepped

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[91] Ibid, p. 264.

[92] Ibid, p. 209.

[93] Ibid, p. 229.

down in 1963 that relations between the two Germanys took steps toward normalization. As the years had passed reunification seemed an ever more unattainable goal. Each side became so successful in identifying with their bloc that their sense of a collective German identity had become obscured.[94] To many Germans reunification had lost its primacy and urgency as a goal. The Berlin Wall was a symbol of the seemingly permanent division of Germany and Europe. But the building of the Wall also represented the failure of the "policy of strength" and opened up the possibility for new ideas. As a new generation came of age, one without experience of war and unity, they began to question the stringent policies and values of the post-war government and seek new solutions.

C. DÉTENTE AND OSTPOLITIK

Ludwig Erhard (CDU) had the difficult job of following in Adenauer's footsteps. Although he looked to provide continuity in government, his policies toward East Germany began to soften. West Berliners were allowed to visit relatives in East Berlin during the holidays and trade with eastern Europe was increased. But diplomatic relations with East Germany and countries that recognized the GDR remained

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[94] Lowenthal, "Why German Stability is So Insecure, *Encounter*," p. 35.

nonexistent. In 1966, Erhard was replaced by Kurt George Kiesinger (CDU). His foreign minister was Willy Brandt (SPD), who saw détente with eastern bloc countries as preferable to diplomatic exclusion. Brandt began to establish diplomatic relations with the GDR and those countries that recognized it, at first primarily to facilitate humanitarian contacts but then economically and politically also. It was hoped that détente would instill a measure of confidence in the east that would promote security, ease the Cold War tensions, and allow normalization of relations with East Germany, objectives that had not come about under Adenauer's "policy of strength."[95]

NATO had adopted a policy of détente as a means to reduce tensions in the Harmel Report in December 1967. The western powers had begun to accept the status quo in Europe, including the division of Germany. But for the FRG, reunification based on free determination was still the ultimate goal. By permitting closer contacts on both sides of the border, the spirit of unity could be kept alive.[96] When Brandt became Chancellor in 1969, he developed a policy of Ostpolitik, not as a repudiation of Adenauer's

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[95] Young, *Cold War Europe, 1945-1989: A Political History*, p. 68.

[96] Fritsch-Bournazel, *Confronting the German Question, Germans on the East-West Divide*, pp. 34-35.

Westpolitik but as an enhancement for German foreign policy and security. Brandt envisioned Germany as a bridge between east and west.[97] A series of treaties between 1970 and 1973 opened up relations between West Germany and eastern Europe, particularly East Germany.[98] Brandt's Ostpolitik proclaimed that there were "two German states in one German nation."[99] It was hoped that détente between the two German states would serve to liberalize the East German regime. But not all Germans shared Brandt's vision and optimism. Some saw Ostpolitik as limiting German self-determination that would hinder reunification efforts.[100]

By the late 1970s détente was deemed a failure, highlighted by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and renewed repression in Poland. Although détente had opened dialogue between the two blocs, the security situation in some ways was worse, particularly for the west. The Soviet military had gained numerical superiority in the 1970s which sparked an arms race for mutual deterrence. In the west, there was questioning of the American ability and resolve to

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[97] Verheyen, Dirk, *The German Question, A Cultural, Historical, and Geopolitical Exploration*, Westview Press, 1991, p. 138.

[98] Fritsch-Bournazel, *Confronting the German Question, Germans on the East-West Divide*, pp. 34-39.

[99] Sodaro, *Moscow, Germany, and the West From Khrushchev to Gorbachev*, p. 152.

[100] James, *A German Identity, 1770-1990*, p. 194.

defend Europe.[101]   Although West Germany remained pro-
Atlantic and pro-American, its leaders began to display more
independence in foreign policy and more willingness to
disagree with the United States over such issues as an
agreement with Russia to build a gas pipeline and INF.   At
the same time, they were strengthening their ties with the
European community, particularly France.[102]

The GDR had its own problems with détente.   East
Germany was much more isolated than West Germany and its
actions were more constrained by the Soviet Union.   Moscow
was willing to ease political, military, and economic
tensions provided that détente was a substitute, not a
prelude to German unity.[103]   But to the East German leaders
détente presented a threat to the GDR's sovereignty,
undermined its indispensability to the Soviet Union, and
eroded popular support of the East German communist party.[104]
When Erich Honecker assumed leadership of the GDR he
emphasized the existence of two German nations with East
Germany as a separate socialist culture, in contrast to
Brandt's vision.   Reunification was no longer a goal in the

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[101] Fritsch-Bournazel, *Confronting the German Question, Germans on the East-West Divide*, pp. 42-43.

[102] Young, *Cold War Europe; 1945-1989: A Political History*, pp. 72-74.

[103] Sodaro, *Moscow, Germany, and the West From Khrushchev to Gorbachev*, p. 11.

[104] Ibid, p. 167.

east.[105] He encouraged economic accords and gestures of good
will but he demonstrated more foreign policy independence
than Moscow was willing to tolerate. To counter his actions
the Soviet media launched a propaganda attack against West
German revanchism.[106]

When Mikhail Gorbachev came to power, Honecker
initially welcomed his reform programs. But Honecker and
other communist leaders soon became concerned that Gorbachev
was weakening the ideological dividing line between
socialism and capitalism. Such a weakening threatened the
raison d'être and existence of the GDR.[107] But Gorbachev had
come to the realization that communism had ultimately failed
in the political, economic, and military spheres. The
people had been alienated from their rulers by the neo-
Stalinist system imposed on them by Moscow. Economically,
the centralized planning system had failed to keep pace with
the west or even to provide basic living standards. Most
significantly, the military build-up of the Cold War had
failed to give the Warsaw Pact a decisive advantage and most
likely contributed to the continued unity of NATO and the

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[105] Verheyen, *The German Question, A Cultural, Historical, and
Geopolitical Exploration*, p. 90.

[106] Sodaro, *Moscow, Germany, and the West From Khrushchev to
Gorbachev*, pp. 308-309.

[107] McAdams, A. James, *Germany Divided*, Princeton University Press,
1993, pp. 179-182.

isolation of the Soviet Union.[108] Gorbachev introduced "new thinking" to the ideological confrontation. He saw a growing need for cooperation and interdependence between socialism and capitalism; the distance between the two need not be so great that it could not be bridged.[109] He planned a program of democratization from above in order to reform communist governments not only in the Soviet Union but in Eastern Europe as well. But once reforms were begun there were demands for even greater political change and faster economic progress.[110] It became evident that if popular opinion were given free rein, the Soviet system would completely disappear.

Once the process of democratization and liberalization had begun the forces of nationalism were not far behind. Many of the national minorities began to demand more autonomy or outright independence. When Gorbachev refused to back the communist regimes with the Soviet military, mass politics took over. The first, and most symbolic, communist regime to fall was that of East Germany. A mass movement developed for reform and power shifted into the hands of the population.[111] East Germans demanded their freedom. The

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[108] Sodaro, *Moscow, Germany, and the West From Khrushchev to Gorbachev,* p. 4.

[109] Ibid, p. 334.

[110] Ibid, p. 318.

Berlin Wall came down in 1989 because it could no longer stem the tide of nationalism and freedom.

German unity was a far different issue in 1989 than it had been in 1871 or in 1945. For over four decades each side of Germany had adopted radically different and at times confrontational identities. Neither could claim to be the embodiment of the true German identity. Their identity as well as security had been a product of the Cold War division of Europe. With the end of the Cold War and the physical reunification of Germany, renewed questions of a common German identity began to emerge.

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111 McAdams, *Germany Divided*, pp. 197-199.

IV.   THE REUNIFICATION OF GERMANY

The end of the Cold War means that the bipolar system
that kept the peace in Europe for nearly five decades is
defunct, and in need of replacement.   International politics
is faced with a period of transition and uncertainty.
Nationalism has reemerged across Europe and in the areas
where communism had suppressed the freedom to worship
organized religion has reemerged as a unifying force.   Both
of these forces have created conflicts since the end of the
Cold War.   Popular support and ideas of legitimacy have
gained new importance but what forms these will assume in
eastern European countries is as yet unknown.   We have
already seen the return of former communists and the
election of neo-fascists to governments.   The end of the
Cold War has created a sense of ambiguity in world politics
as countries seek to redefine themselves and their place in
the new world as questions of national identity and security
have reemerged.   These questions take on an added
significance in the case of Germany.   Because of its past,
German actions are carefully scrutinized for signs of
resurgent German aggression.   German leaders are sensitive
to these concerns and have made every effort to demonstrate
that reunited Germany is a very different country from one
that wreaked havoc across Europe twice in this century.

A.   THE END OF THE COLD WAR

The reunification of Germany in 1990 was one of the most momentous events to mark the end of the Cold War. For the first time in nearly 50 years Germany was once again a unified nation with true sovereignty over its domestic and foreign affairs. This milestone was accomplished with the approval of all of its neighbors, although not without some degree of skepticism and trepidation on the part of some of them. The Final Settlement with respect to Germany was accomplished by the Two Plus Four Treaty between the two Germanys, plus the United States, France, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union. In addition, there were numerous bilateral consultations and agreements that are likely to prove important to the future security of Germany and Europe. One of the most significant was the agreement concluded by Germany and the Soviet Union in July 1990, which stipulated that Germany would be free to choose its alliances, that Soviet troops would withdraw from German soil by the end of 1994, and the peacetime strength of the German armed forces would be reduced to a maximum of 370,000 troops. Germany has also reaffirmed that it will not wage any war of aggression and that it will renounce the manufacture, possession of, and control over nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons.[112] In historic terms

reunification has created a unique security situation.

Germany, for the first time, is no longer a potential battle

zone,[113] but a democratic state surrounded entirely by other

democracies which it views unambiguously as friends, and

partners.[114] Never before has Germany's strategic situation

been as favorable as it is today.[115]

With the attainment of complete, national sovereignty,

the German government has had to reconsider its foreign

policy and security posture. Upon reunification, Chancellor

Kohl clearly laid out Germany's goals for the future. In a

letter to the heads of all the governments with which

Germany had diplomatic relations, he declared that:

> Through its regained national unity, our country
> wants to serve the cause of global peace and
> advance the unification of Europe. That is the
> mandate of our time-honoured constitution, the
> basic law, which will also apply to the united
> Germany.
>   At the same time, we stand by our moral and
> legal obligations resulting from German history.
>   We know that upon unification, we will also
> assume greater responsibility within the community
> of nations as a whole. Our foreign policy will
> therefore remain geared toward global partnership,

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[112] Treaty on the final settlement with respect to Germany, Article
3(1), Moscow, 12 September 1990.

[113] Speech by Bundeswehr Inspector General Klaus Naumann, *Welt am
Sonntag,* 27 March 1994, pp. 25/27, FBIS-WEU-94-061, 27 March 1994.

[114] Inacker, Michael J., "The Debate is One That Should First Be
Conducted in Qualitative Terms and Only Secondarily in Quantitative
Terms," *Welt am Sonntag*, 20 March 1994, p. 11, FBIS-WEU-94-057, 20 March
1994.

[115] Defense Minister Volker Ruehe comments, Hamburg DPA 1116 GMT 15
March 1994, FBIS-WEU-94-051-A, 16 March 1994.

close cooperation and a peaceful reconciliation of interests.

   In the future, German soil will be a source of peace only. We are aware that the inviolability of the borders and respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all states in Europe is a precondition for peace.[116]

Once reunification was accomplished, however, the process of adapting to new international and domestic situations was more difficult than anticipated. Germany found itself facing a myriad of questions regarding its role in Europe. Cold War policies were no longer applicable to the issues that Germany now confronts.

B. GERMAN IDENTITY IN A REUNIFIED GERMANY

Despite German attempts to assure the international community that they will remain a force for peace and integration, there are lingering apprehensions about the size and strength of reunified Germany. Many considered the division of Germany to be a safeguard against renewed German nationalistic aggression. Some of those doubters are Germans themselves. The Greens fought against reunification as a "danger for Europe," and Gunter Grass, a noted German writer and intellectual, spoke of the dangers in Germany's history.[117] Foreign Minister Kinkel has acknowledged that

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[116] Excerpt from a letter from Chancellor Kohl to heads of state on 3 October 1990, as quoted in *Germany and Europe in Transition*, Adam Daniel Rotfeld and Walther Stutzle, eds., Oxford University Press, 1991, p. 187.

because of Germany's past, it's actions are scrutinized more closely than other countries, and the Germans are sensitive to that.[118] Behind the scrutiny seems to be the fear that deep-down the Germans remain the same militaristic and aggressive people who cannot be trusted with unity, sovereignty, or power.

In 1989, as the drive toward unity gained momentum, the rallying cry was "Wir sind ein Volk." But once reunification was underway it became apparent that east and west Germans had little in common. The Germans are not only not the same people that they were at the start of the century, they do not yet have a common identity amongst themselves. Reunification brought together two very different people, not just with different forms of governments, but also divergent histories, values, and attitudes. World War II had discredited old ideas of German nationalism and identity. The division of Germany during the Cold War caused problems of legitimacy for both East and West Germany that were partially resolved by recreating political, economic, and cultural identities in each state based on socialist-communist and democratic principles respectively. But by doing so they also created divergent

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[117] Brunssen, Frank, "*Angst vor Deutschland* and German Self-Definition," *Debatte*, No. 1/1994, p. 54.

[118] Interview by Heribert Prantl, "Doing the Splits Between Money and Ethics," Munich *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, 16 July 1994, p. 12, FBIS-WEU-94-137, 16 July 1994.

histories during the Cold War for the Germans. The Germans must come to a common understanding of their past in order to redefine a common identity. A "new" German identity has not yet been forged, nor has their "old" identity emerged. The process of arriving at a common identity will take time and patience.

Yet many Germans are uncomfortable with the idea of creating an identity, equating it with the rise of nationalism. Heiner Geissler, the acting chairman of the CDU cautioned Germans about renewed "thinking in nationalistic terms." Geissler believes that seeking a German identity is unnecessary and perhaps dangerous because the concept of nationalism has been discredited. He says that, "Germany's future is not in the reestablishment of a national state, but in opening up to other ideas, and in the creation of a federal European structure."[119]

Chancellor Kohl agrees with Geissler's assessment of the importance of European integration but he sees the necessity of a common German identity. In an address to the Bundestag, he stressed that "European unity is the most effective insurance against the reemergence of nationalism, chauvinism and racism." But he acknowledges the importance of maintaining unique identities when he said, "We want

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[119] "Geissler Warns of Growing Nationalism," by "eli/mes," Munich *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, 20 June 1994, p. 2, FBIS-WEU-94-119, 20 June 1994.

unity with diversity. We do not want a centralized European

state that makes regional, national, cultural traditions,

and historic experiences disappear. In a unified Europe. .

.we will remain Germans and French, keeping our identity."[120]

Kohl is attempting to channel emerging German identity along

constructive paths. He has called on Germans to engage in

"active patriotism" and addresses those who fear such

sentiments, "Let us also resist the temptation to despise

patriotism just because this virtue got a bad reputation

during the Nazi period and was abused at the. time." He

links his concept of German patriotism with the broader

German interests, "Just as freedom and love for one's

fatherland belong together, in the future patriotism and

commitment to Europe must supplement each other." He is

also careful to stress that "anyone who fans hatred against

foreigners can never claim to be a good patriot."[121] While

talk of German patriotism may raise some apprehensions, his

attempts to channel those feelings could prevent that gap

being filled by the rhetoric of radical extremist groups.

One aspect of reunited Germany that has giving credence

to the skeptics is the undeniable rise in extremist

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[120] Chancellor Kohl's address to the Bundestag as reported on Munich
ARD Television Network 0632 GMT 27 May 1994, FBIS-WEU-94-103, 27 May
1994.

[121] Broadcast on Hamburg DPA 1152 GMT 19 June 1994, FBIS-WEU-94-119,
21 June 1994.

incidents in Germany. These have been on the rise not only in Germany but throughout Europe and even in the United States. In view of Germany's past, however, German instances of violence are viewed more critically and frequently compared to the racist activities that took place in the 1930s heralding Hitler's rise to power. But there are several important differences between today's activities and those of the turbulent 1930s. Germany now has a well established democratic tradition and political leaders committed to its continuance. These acts of violence are also carried out by a very small minority, while a far greater number of Germans have actively condemned these acts. The will of the people now fall in the center rather than at the political extremes. Another important difference was the presence of a large revisionist army in the 1930s that no longer exists today.[122] It has been suggested that these acts of violence are not so much an indicator of resurgent German aggression as a result of the social and economic upheaval created by reunification and the end of the Cold War.[123] This would also explain the rise in extremist activities in other parts of Europe and the

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[122] Fulbrook, Mary, "Aspects of Society and Identity in the New Germany," *Daedalus Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, Winter 1994, p. 230.

[123] LeGloannec, Anne-Marie, "On German Identity," *Daedalus Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, Winter 1994, p. 143.

fact that incidents of violence in Germany decreased by one third during the first half of 1994.[124] This decrease also reflects the public outcry against these actions and the government's concern and willingness to take action.

Racial violence, however, is also a reflection of a growing contradiction in German laws designed for Cold War politics. German citizenship laws, based on ethnic origin, were intended to include Germans that were cut off from West Germany by Cold War borders. This meant that anyone with German blood ties was automatically a German citizen. Germany's liberal asylum laws encouraged refugees to seek shelter there, but their citizenship requirements excluded most foreigners. During the years of economic expansion in the 1950s and 1960s migrant workers filled gaps in German labor demands but they were less welcome after the economic slow down of the 1970s, even ones that had been born and raised in Germany. But because of the restrictive citizenship laws, they had little legal status in Germany and became easy targets for extremist groups.[125] Although changes to both the asylum laws and the citizenship laws have been proposed, real change requires that German thinking be revised more in keeping with its integrationist

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[124] Reported by Hamburg DPA 1104 GMT, 8 August 1994, FBIS-WEU-94-153-A, 9 August 1994.

[125] Fulbrook, "Aspects of Society and Identity in the New Germany," pp. 225-227.

policies. As Mary Fulbrook aptly commented, "New Germany may have to redefine its concept of national identity and free itself from the centuries-old concept of ethnically homogeneous, if regionally differentiated, German Kulturnation."[126]

In redefining a common German identity, Germany can not rely solely on either its distant or near past but on the future. The Germany that is seeking an identity for the twenty-first century is vastly different from the country created in 1871. Both Europe's and Germany's place in the world are far different. Germany's present unity was attained not through war and by antagonizing its neighbors but through peaceful negotiation. Germany today is firmly entrenched in democratic tradition and popular sovereignty. And democracies are capable of assimilating different ideas and values and allowing a variety of identities to coexist side by side. Germany has firmly rejected the idea of Sonderweg, a special mission for Germany, and is now focusing its political energies on furthering European integration.

C.   THE OUT-OF-AREA ISSUE

One of the most significant issues faced by reunified Germany is the question of the role of the Bundeswehr in

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[126] Ibid, p. 232.

out-of-area operation. This issue received international attention before Germany was prepared to deal with it. During the final stages of the two-plus-four treaty negotiations Iraq invaded Kuwait, creating an international crisis and a dilemma for Germany.

Initial German concerns centered on whether the crisis would disrupt the reunification negotiations or cause the Soviet Union to change its position regarding its military withdrawal from eastern Germany.

Although neither of these fears proved warranted, German foreign affairs remained constrained by the reunification process and the nature of their democracy. Until all the parties had ratified the treaties and Soviet troops had departed German soil, Germany remained careful not to create animosity that could undermine its efforts. Additionally, unification itself absorbed much of Germany's energies, and certainly its budget, since the process was both more difficult and more expensive than anticipated. Through the Gulf crisis, German security concerns were focused primarily on the changes occurring within its own borders, in central Europe, and in the Soviet Union.

Germany's allies, on the other hand, expected greater participation in the Iraq crisis, which was viewed as an exemplar for post-Cold War conflict. But Germany remained reluctant to commit its troops to a conflict outside the

NATO area. Instead it provided substantial financial support to the coalition efforts in order to fulfill its international obligations while upholding the letter of its fundamental law. Despite its obvious distractions during the Iraq conflict, and its efforts to contribute within self-imposed limits, Germany was harshly criticized by the international community for its restraint during the Gulf War. This forced consideration of the issue of Germany's future international role and the use of its military in wider roles at the very onset of reunification.[127]

The Germans' self-imposed restraint on the use of their military reflects their reservations about the use of military force since the end of World War II.[128] The controversy began with the question of whether Germany should be rearmed at all. The debate was both international and domestic. Allied restrictions on West German rearmament were not loosened until the Korean War forced the issue of western defense. German participation was deemed necessary by most of the western allies although there were serious reservations, particularly from France.[129] There was also

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[127] See "Germany and the Iraq Conflict," by Karl Kaiser and Klaus Becher, Chapter 4 in *Western Europe and the Gulf*, Nicole Gnesotto and John Roper, eds., The Institute for Security Studies, Western European Union, 1992, for a full discussion regarding Germany's involvement in and debate surrounding Germany's participation in the Gulf War.

[128] Clemens, Clay, "Opportunity of Obligation? Redefining Germany's Military Role Outside of NATO," *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol. 19, No. 2, Winter 1993, pp. 231-232.

significant internal debate on the issue since many Germans felt that they should renounce weapons forever.[130] Militarism and the use of military power had been thoroughly discredited by Germany's experiences and devastating defeats in the two world wars. But despite public reticence, German leaders believed that the utility of rearmament outweighed the risks. Rearmament was necessary for more complete integration with the West, to support Adenauer's policy of strength, and later to provide stability for détente. It was feared that neutrality could make Germany vulnerable to the Soviet Union by isolating it from the West.[131]

Once the decision to rearm was made, the Germans kept their military role low-key by limiting the use of their armed forces to defense of their own territory. They were sensitive to their role in history and had strong reservations regarding the appearance of aggressively armed German troops. These reservations precluded the use of German troops in all of Europe as well as much of northern Africa and southeast Asia. Also, with Germany at the center of the bipolar conflict, it was the most likely site of a potential battlefield. With German troops at the vanguard

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[129] Craig, *Europe Since 1815*, pp. 550-551.

[130] Craig, *From Bismarck to Adenauer: Aspects of German Statecraft*, p. 132.

[131] Clemens, "Opportunity of Obligation? Redefining Germany's Military Role Outside of NATO," p. 234.

of the central front it seemed inappropriate to expect
German participation in other engagements. Any escalation
of Cold War tensions would have resulted in Germans fighting
other Germans.[132] Germany's caution and circumspection
regarding their use of military force during the Cold War
created deep-rooted habit of restraint that had been
accepted by both the German public and the international
community.

The end of the Cold War has now eliminated much of the
rationale for not engaging in out-of-area operations. There
is no longer the possibility of West Germans facing East
Germans on the battlefield. Memories of aggressive German
military action have faded since Germany has proven itself
to be a reliable ally. In addition, with the restraints on
German actions removed, Germany's allies have voiced their
expectation that Germany assume more responsibilities
towards world peace within the membership of international
institutions, including greater participation in out-of-area
operations. Nevertheless, even as the Germans have
cautiously begun to expand their military participation
beyond strict self-defense, every action has engendered
debate within Germany.

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[132] Kamp, Karl-Heinz, "The German Bundeswehr in out-of-area
operation: to engage or not to engage?," *The World Today*, Vol. 49, Nos.
8-9, August-September 1993, p. 165.

Up until July 1994, their reluctance to use the German armed forces for purposes outside of national or NATO defense had been supported by a narrow interpretation of the constitution.[133] The debate primarily revolved around two articles of the Basic Law. Article 24 states that:

> For the maintenance of peace, the Federation may enter a system of mutual collective security; in doing so it shall consent to such limitations upon its rights of sovereignty as will bring about and secure a peaceful and lasting order in Europe and among the nations of the world.

But Article 87a specified that:

> The Federation shall establish armed forces for defence purposes," and "Apart from defence, the Armed Forces may only be used insofar as explicitly permitted by this Basic Law.

It has become accepted to interpret the Basic Law by the narrowest definition of "defensive purposes" as allowing only protection against the attack of national borders.

It is interesting to note that Article 24 was a part of the original Basic Law which was adopted by the West German government in May 1949, only a month after the North Atlantic Treaty was signed. However, West Germany did not regain its sovereignty until it was permitted to join NATO and raise an armed forces as a NATO contingent in 1955.[134] Article 87a was not added until March 1956, after the

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[133] Clemens, "Opportunity of Obligation? Redefining Germany's Military Role Outside of NATO," pp. 231-232.

[134] Craig, Gordon A., *Europe Since 1815*, p.551.

process of German rearmament had begun. At no time has Germany specifically requested special consideration regarding its obligations in any international organization. Germany became a member of the United Nations in 1973, without qualifications to its obligations.[135] In addition to NATO and the UN, Germany is also involved in the Western European Union (WEU) and the Conference on Security and cooperation in Europe (CSCE), both of which entail significant security obligations.

Germany's membership in international organization has contributed substantially to German security and stability. Continuing involvement with those organizations will be no less important in the future. With Germany's economic strength and central position in Europe, it will have a vested interest in achieving and maintaining global stability. Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel has also suggested that "Not the least because of our historical past, Germany is morally obliged to participate in defending peace. Without the readiness to do so, Germany would be unable to be in the alliance and to act. Our vital interests as an economic, trade, and cultural nation in the world would also be hurt."[136]

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[135] Kamp, "The German Bundeswehr in out-of-area operation: to engage or not to engage?," p. 165.

Chancellor Kohl agrees that Germany must now be willing to shoulder more equitable responsibility for the global stability that it depends on:

> Our security and negotiating ability in foreign policy matters is geared to the fact that we are reliable partners and that our allies trust us. After all, our allies stood by us in the past, and continue to do so. When it come to peace and freedom in Europe and the world, Germany must not stand on the sidelines. We must share the responsibility at the side of our friends and partners. The Bundeswehr's involvement in measures to safeguard world peace within the community of nations is not only a central issue of German foreign and security policy, but also a question of German honor and identity.[137]

In this light, for Kohl, "the issue of the Bundeswehr's deployment is a the heart of united Germany's future alliance and partnership capability."[138]

Although the narrowest interpretation of the Basic Law has been accepted more or less since its inception, a debate over the validity of that interpretation has gained momentum in recent years. The chancellor's party and its southern counterpart, the CDU/CSU (Christian Democrat and Christian Social Unions), have taken the position that the Basic Law, as written, allowed for German participation in both

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[136] Stated during a speech at the Graf-Stauffenberg barracks in Sigmaringen on 29 April 1994, Bonn *Bulletin*, No. 40/5 May 1994, pp. 349-351, FBIS-WEU-94-095, 18 May 1994.

[137] Stated during a speech on 18 April 1994, Bonn *Bulletin*, 28 April 1994, pp. 5-6, FBIS-WEU-94-086, 28 April 1994.

[138] Berlin DDP/ADN 1059 GMT 19 June 1994, FBIS-WEU-94-118, 19 June 1994.

peacekeeping and peacemaking operations including combat
roles when necessary but only when conducted with other
countries under the auspices of international law. The Free
Democrats (FDP), a part of the government coalition, believe
that a change in current policy would necessitate a change
to the Basic Law, but once that change was made combat
operations would be feasible for the Bundeswehr. The
opposition party, the Social Democrats (SDP) have proposed a
change to the Basic Law that would permit German
participation in out-of-area missions but only UN
peacekeeping missions not involving a combat role. The
Greens have been divided on the issue, with some rejecting
the use of the military for any purpose outside of
territorial defense while others argue for the use of force
to defend humanitarian measures as in cases like Bosnia.[139]

The political deadlock on the out-of-area issue
continues despite government initiatives to widen the
participation of the Bundeswehr in UN missions. Although
German participation was limited during the Gulf War, since
then they have begun to respond to international pressure to
participate more fully in UN missions abroad. The German
Navy took part in mineclearing operations in the Gulf War,

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[139] Kamp, "The German Bundeswehr in out-of-area operation: to engage
or not to engage?," pp. 165-166; also Clemens, "Opportunity of
Obligation? Redefining Germany's Military Role Outside of NATO," pp.
233-237.

whereas similar requests for German assistance had been
rejected as recently as 1988. German helicopters
participated in support mission for Kurdish refugees in
Turkey and Iran. The German Air Force has also
participated in UN observer missions over Iraq to monitor
the elimination of weapons of mass destruction. In 1992 the
Bundeswehr provided medical support for UN troops in
Cambodia, and committed forces to patrol duty in the
Adriatic, for food airlifts to Somalia, and to NATO AWACS
airplanes patrolling air space in Bosnia. In 1993 Germany
took part in UNOSOM II in Somalia, providing logistical
support for the UN. Although German participation in these
efforts have been small and have avoided any combat related
missions, it represents a move toward greater participation.
Yet even these limited efforts have been criticized by
government opponents as going beyond the legal
constitutional limits. Following the decision to take part
in the operation in the Adriatic, the SPD appealed to the
Constitutional Court for a ruling on the legality of German
participation.[140]

On 12 July 1994, the Constitutional Court cleared the
way for greater German participation in multilateral
operations by ruling that the Basic Law allowed such

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[140] Kamp, "The German Bundeswehr in out-of-area operation: to engage
or not to engage?," p. 166-168.

missions. However the Court ruled that the government must receive Bundestag approval by a simple majority prior to each deployment of German armed forces.[141]

Although the court ruling now allows Germany to participate in out-of-area operations, the issue is not yet settled. While the court's decision will eliminate the legal objections to sending troops abroad, some political obstacles remain. The CDU/CSU government plans to draft an armed forces deployment law that will provide criteria for the use of the German military and government and parliamentary responsibilities in the event of the necessity for deployment.[142] A true test of Germany's resolve and willingness to participate has not yet occurred. Since any deployment must be approved by the Bundestag, political wrangling could effectively prevent deployments. Also, public consensus and approval have yet to be achieved. Many Germans remain wary of sending German troops to foreign soil particularly where Germans took aggressive action in the past.[143] At the same time, public opinion has increasingly

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[141] "The Ruling of the Federal Constitutional Court on the Deployment of the German Armed Forces," German Information Center, July 1994, pp. 1-3.

[142] Reitz, Ulrich, "The End of a Legend," Munich *Focus*, 27 June 1994, pp. 18-20, FBIS-WEU-94-126, 27 June 1994.

[143] Allen, Arthur (AP correspondent), "Germany unclips wings of its military for overseas action," *Monterey County Herald*, 13 July 1994, p. 2A. Allen says that Oskar Lafontaine, governor of Saarland state ... once said sending German troops abroad was like "giving liqueured bonbons to a reformed alcoholic."

supported German participation in UN peacekeeping and peacemaking operations. However, the public must be fully apprised of the necessity for new roles for the Bundeswehr.[144] Lastly, the German military will require organizational restructuring to meet new requirements. Some steps have already been taken in this regard. The White Paper, released in April 1994, was already geared toward the expectation of an enlarged German role in future multinational operations in order to assume its international responsibilities.[145]

D.   IMPLICATIONS FOR GERMAN SECURITY

The Constitutional Court ruling has opened the way for Germany to at last become a normal country, in that it now has the same choices to make regarding its international responsibilities as do its obvious peers within the international community. But the freedom to act does not mean that Germany must necessarily participate in every operation. Like its international partners, Germany must consider what interests will best be served by their involvement.

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[144] Kamp, "The German Bundeswehr in out-of-area operation: to engage or not to engage?," p. 168.

[145] White Paper 1994, p. 43, para. 319.

Although the Court ruling was a significant victory for Chancellor Kohl, his government has been careful to emphasize that Germany's long-standing policy of restraint will be continued. Foreign Minister Kinkel has said that "militarization of foreign policy and interventionism is out of the question." Germany remains committed to a "value-oriented foreign policy." Each action will be carefully considered on its own merits. Germany will participate only under the auspices of a UN Security Council mandate and will never take action on its own. However, there will be no automatic German commitment to multilateral actions; he expects that Germany will say "no" more than "yes." Even under a UN mandate, the use of force must be the last resort.[146] Kinkel also stresses that the ruling will enhance European solidarity:

> The European aspect of the ruling. . .is no less significant. A serious obstacle to our ability to act as a reliable partner within the alliance, in the EU, and in the WEU has been removed, and the path for the development of a European foreign, security, and defense policy has been cleared. . . . The Federal Government emphatically supports a common European foreign and security policy. It is an indispensable element of a free and efficient EU, and a precautionary measure against nationalism and ethnic and religious disputes.[147]

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[146] Gennrich, Claus, "Kinkel--Now We Are Free, If the Security Council Agrees," Main *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, 14 July 1994, p. 3, FBIS-WEU-94-136, 14 July 1994.

The focus of German security policy is on cooperative efforts within its alliances and multinational institutions. According to the 1994 White Paper "the *Bundeswehr* is an alliance Army."[148] Germany has repeatedly emphasized that it will not act on its own but only with allies and partners. Because of Germany's history as an aggressor nation and the renewed sensitivities of its neighbors following unification, Germany has committed to scrupulous multinationality in its military activities. But Germany would like to see its roles within NATO, WEU, CSCE, and the UN with regard to peace operations as primarily political and economic, not military.[149]

The NATO alliance is still considered by Germany to be the best means of coordinating Western policy aimed at building a common security in Europe. NATO provides the framework for incorporating German military might and for maintaining a US military presence in Europe.[150] NATO's primary role is still to maintain a lasting peace in Europe in conjunction with other institutions. The January 1994 NATO summit in Brussels explicitly reaffirmed that the

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[147] Statement by Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel in the Bundestag in Bonn as reported on Munich ARD Television Network 0930 GMT 22 July 1994, FBIS-WEU-94-141, 22 July 1994.

[148] White Paper 1994, p. 84, para. 511.

[149] Inacker, "The Debate is One That Should First Be Conducted in Qualitative Terms and Only Secondarily in Quantitative Terms," FBIS-WEU-94-057.

[150] White Paper 1994, p. 48, para. 410.

ability to exercise collective defense remains the cornerstone of European security. Although it is unlikely that NATO will be required to defend itself, the numerous conflicts on alliance borders require NATO participation in the international resolution of crises. NATO reform and European integration have become more closely linked to one another and the WEU will be strengthened as the European pillar of the Alliance.[151]

German security will remain an issue of prime concern for Germany in the post-Cold War era. During the Cold War Germany found that it's security was best assured by integration with the West and membership in multinational institutions. Since the reunification, Germany has been the staunchest advocate of further expansion of the institutions that played such a vital role in the peace that Europe has enjoyed since the end of World War II.

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[151] Inacker, "The Debate is One That Should First Be Conducted in Qualitative Terms and Only Secondarily in Quantitative Terms," FBIS-WEU-94-057.

V. CONCLUSION

Germany's history as a nation, in many respects, is the history of Europe. This reflects not so much its geographical position, although that too is relevant, but the central position in the European system of states that Germany assumed upon unification in 1871. Because of its size and economic potential, it was inevitable that Germany become a major player in European affairs. German unification disrupted the balance of power in Europe and during the relatively brief 74-year period of unity, Germany led Europe through the two world wars in the twentieth century. After the Second World War, Germany once again found itself divided. Despite the tensions of the Cold War, Europe has enjoyed five decades of peace. Some have attributed that peace to the division of Germany which they believe contained its powers and aggressive tendencies. The reunification of Germany has raised renewed questions regarding German national identity and national security. These concerns reflect the fear that German unity will once again become a threat to the rest of Europe and result in the disruption of peace. In some ways the reunification of Germany faintly echoes the creation of the German state in 1871. A large powerful country was formed in a short period of time by combining disparate German states. Reunification

of Germany has also marked the end of the bipolar system of states that dominated international affairs during the Cold War, creating a certain amount of ambiguity in foreign relations. But despite the vague similarities, the situation is vastly different today. Germany is a very different country and, just as important, Europe presents a quite different environment. Because of these difference, Germany is unlikely to revert to nationalistic aggressive behavior that the skeptics seem to fear.

German ideas of national identity have also changed. The anti-foreign and protectionist features of the national identity that formed after 1871 was overtaken by the ideological confrontation of the Cold War. Since reunification there has been renewed interest in a common German identity, but the idea of nationalism and national interests still make many Germans very uncomfortable. Nevertheless, with the end of the Cold War and the reunification of Germany, there has been a reemergence of national interests. However, those interests revolve around the integration of Europe and Germany's multinational responsibilities. The rise of nationalism has been more prevalent elsewhere in Europe, primarily in the newly liberated eastern European countries but also in Italy and Belgium where neo-fascist parties have made gains in recent elections. Even the initial spate of extremist violence

that marked the beginning of the reunification process and caused so much concern has abated considerably. The majority of the German people are politically central with only a very small minority on the extremist fringes. A common German identity has not yet fully emerged but Germany remains focused on liberal-democratic ideals and European integration. Ideas of identity do not revolve around the supremacy of *das Volk* but rather Germany's place in Europe.

Concerns about German identity revolve to a large degree around foreign policy issues. German interaction with the countries around them reflect their perception of how to protect their security. German aggression is not an ingrained trait but was a reaction to the European security problems of the past. The German state was created in 1871 in order to resolve their security dilemma of the early nineteenth century. The fragmented German states were threatened primarily by the powerful French nation to the west but also by the Russians to the east. German identity therefore coalesced around anti-foreign sentiments and the belief that Germans must unite to create a bulwark against threats from all sides. German unity was achieved largely through a series of successful wars that sparked a national cohesion and an exaggerated sense of pride. The reunification of 1990, however, was conducted peacefully, entirely through negotiation with the concurrence of all its

neighbors. Instead of antagonistic anti-foreign overtones,
reunification was conducted under the banner of further
European unity and integration.

German engagement in Europe has been the one solution
to German security problems that has proven to support
lasting peace. Skeptics of German unity often forget that
Europe enjoyed over four decades of peace after the founding
of the Second Reich. Bismarck had anticipated the
disruptive consequences of German unity of the European
system of states and sought to avoid the problems of being
encircled by enemies. His solution to Germany's precarious
security situation was to create a system of alliances that
would tie Germany to the other powers in order to make an
anti-German war unlikely. Although there were inherent
problems in the complex network of secret agreements which
carried few guarantees, it nevertheless accomplished
Bismarck's objectives. It was only after Bismarck's forced
retirement that these agreements were allowed to lapse and
Germany found itself more isolated. Kaiser Wilhelm II's
aggressive tactics to boost Germany from a continental power
to a world power exacerbated the situation which culminated
in World War I. After the war Germany's political and
economic isolation imposed by the terms of the Versailles
Treaty was a chief contributor to the collapse of the
fledgling Weimar Republic and facilitated Adolf Hitler's

emergence as the new German leader under his extremist
National Socialist Party flag. Hitler used international
liberal guilt to further his own ends and generate a policy
of appeasement among the European states. He steadfastly
refused to entangle Germany in European politics. Hitler's
policies further isolated Germany and he sought to expand
the German sphere in order to ensure security. His efforts
nearly destroyed Germany. After World War II, Germany and
Europe were divided. During the Cold War, West Germany
fully integrated with the West, but until the 1970s remained
aloof from eastern Europe, especially East Germany. German
security was guaranteed first and foremost by the Atlantic
Alliance and the continued presence of the United States in
Europe but also by Germany's involvement in the European
Union, the United Nations, CSCE, and WEU. Germany's network
of memberships in international institutions is far more
complex today than in Bismarck's time, but today those
associations for the most part overlap and reinforce one
another. Germany's immediate and long-term goal is to now
further the integration of Europe in order to extend the
peace and prosperity that western Europe has achieved.

Today Germany enjoys the most favorable security
situation in its history. Geography has long been an
important factor in Germany's security dilemmas. Because of
its central position, it was vulnerable to encirclement by

the French and Russians who had historically used German lands to expand their influence and territory. Germany's integration with the West after World War II resolved half of this security problem. Indeed, the reconciliation between Germany and France has been one of the outstanding achievements of the Federal Republic. Instead of representing the traditional threat from the west, France is now one of Germany's staunchest allies. With the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the communist governments to the east, Germany, for the first time, is surrounded entirely by acknowledged friends and democratic states.

The differences between the Second Reich and the unified Federal Republic are not all external in nature. Germany's political culture has also altered radically. Symbolically, Germany has detached itself from its Prussian heritage. In a literal sense the area that comprised Prussia was cut off from Germany after World War II and absorbed into Poland and Russia. Significantly, Germany has specifically renounced all claims to that territory. The authoritarianism that was a legacy of Prussia's leading role in German unity has also given way to firmly entrenched liberal-democratic traditions. In the past, Germany depended on an elitist system of strong leaders that set foreign and domestic policies with little input from the public. Today the German constitution sets specific limits

on the government's powers and protects the rights of the people. The government is responsive to the public's interests through its electoral system, party structure, and parliamentary representation. In addition, the constitution carefully circumscribes the establishment and use of the military. The Prussian militaristic traditions were thoroughly discredited by the experiences of the two world wars and have been replaced by an army of "citizens in uniform" with a tradition of military restraint. During the reunification process Germany agreed to reduce its military to 370,000 troops and have not only met that goal but have cut an additional 30,000. In addition, Germany has unilaterally renounced the use of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons.

Despite the notion of *Sonderweg*, a special path for Germany, German history has reflected, and in many cases intensified European trends. Germany was a relative latecomer to the unifying forces of nationalism and German national unity was achieved with much less bloodshed than French attempts at national expansion. In the years before the First World War, German attempts to expand its influence and become a world power reflected the policies of the other great powers of Europe. Then after World War I, many countries in Europe struggled with forces of extremism either on the right or the left. Germany was not the first

fascist country in Europe but followed in Italy's footsteps. But whereas the earlier following of European trends presented a security threat for Germany's neighbors, since World War II Germany has embarked on a program of integration with the west under liberal-democratic principles that not only ensures its own security but enhances the security of the entire continent. With the end of the Cold War, Germany is seeking to expand the success of integration and the security that accompanied that policy to the east.

The reunification of Germany and the restoration of full sovereignty means that Germany has the opportunity to be a "normal" country for the first time since before World War I, in that it has the same choices and responsibilities of its peers in the international system. But in order to act as a normal country, Germany and the rest of the world must finally put the past behind them. Germany recognizes that because of its history its actions will be carefully scrutinized, and German policies reflect their sensitivity oversensitivity on the part of either Germany or its partners to the memories of past German aggression. But oversensitivity on the part of Germany or its partners in the international community could undermine its efforts to become a fully participating member.

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    Chairman, National Security Affairs (NS/Bn)
    Naval Postgraduate School
    Monterey, California 93943

5. Professor Donald Abenheim 1
    Department of National Security Affairs (NS/Ah)
    Naval Postgraduate School
    Monterey, California 93943

6. Professor Daniel Moran 1
    Department of National Security Affairs (NS)
    Naval Postgraduate School
    Monterey, California 93943

7. LCDR Mary-Ann McGriff 1
    Personnel Support Activity Detachment, Guam
    PSC 455, Box 172
    APO AP 96540-1723